

King visits 4th Royal Mechanised Division

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein, the supreme commander of the Jordanian Armed Forces, Monday made an inspection tour of a number of army units of the Fourth Royal Mechanised Division and inspected the troops training programmes. After listening to the commander of units outlining the nature and scope of training which the troops were undertaking, the King voiced his appreciation of the officers' efforts. King Hussein was accompanied on the visit by His Royal Highness Prince Talal Ben Mohammad, his military secretary, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff of the Jordanian Armed Force Field Marshal Abdul Hafez Marie Kaabneh.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تيمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية «الراي»

Toy guns are banned in Algeria

ALGIERS (AFP) — The Algerian authorities launched an advertising campaign Monday announcing a total ban on toy guns, as stipulated by an Interior Ministry decree. The decree, dated Jan. 25, specifies that "the importation, manufacture, distribution and sale of all toys resembling handguns or other weapons is forbidden in the national territory." The decree was introduced to help in the fight against armed militants. The Interior Ministry has already banned the use of some chemical fertilisers that armed groups use to manufacture bombs, as well as armour-plating used by the groups to reinforce cars, walls and the doors of hideouts. A special permit is needed to use acetylene gas canisters. Filled with powder, bolts and scrap iron, the canisters turn into powerful explosive devices which can cause considerable damage and loss of human life. The rental and sale of housing is also strictly controlled to prevent groups from renting or buying properties to use as hideouts.

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4 Lebanese MPs lose their seats

BEIRUT (AFP) — Four Lebanese deputies lost their seats in a landmark ruling Monday by the country's Constitutional Council after allegations of irregularities in last year's legislative elections, officials said. It was the first time in the country's history that the council, Lebanon's top judicial authority, had invalidated election results. The council decided to hold by-elections within two months to replace the four, who included Minister of Culture Fawzi Hbeish, a Maronite Christian. The others were Khaled Daher, a Sunni Muslim representing the stringent jamaa Islamiyah, and Maronite independents Henri Sheid and Emile Nawfal. The council's verdict was based on evidence of errors in vote counting presented by losing candidates in the summer's legislative elections, amid widespread accusations of voting irregularities.

Algerian family of four massacred

ALGIERS (AFP) — A group of anti-government militants massacred a family of four at Sidi Mousa, south of Algiers, over the weekend, press reports said here Monday. The "terrorists," whose number was not specified, surrounded the isolated farmstead some 25 kilometres south of the capital at around 10:00 p.m. Friday night. They then cut the throat of a 70-year-old man, another man and a woman, before setting fire to the home, burning alive a five-year-old girl who had hidden beneath a bed, the press reports added. The attackers also abducted a young woman and seized all the belongings of the family before fleeing, the Al Watan and Al Khabar newspapers added. According to Al Watan a further four people, including three women and a man, were killed Friday by "a group of terrorists" in Boussada in the south of the country. The newspaper said that another man had been found with his throat cut near Tipaza, 100 kilometres west of Algiers, overnight Saturday, and that a bomb had been defused in the nearby town of Kolea.

Palestinian police release imprisoned Jihad members

GAZA CITY (AFP) — The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) has released around 15 members of the Islamic Jihad arrested after attempted anti-Israeli bombings in April, a Jihad official said Monday. The official, who refused to be named, said "a few, no more than 15" members of Jihad had been released in the past week. A Palestinian security official, who also asked not to be identified, would not confirm the releases, but said anyone "against whom charges had not been proven would be freed." Some 200 people with links to Jihad were arrested by Palestinian police in the wake of a bombing claimed by Hamas in Tel Aviv which left three Israelis dead in March and two failed bomb attacks by Jihad on Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip on April 1.

Crown Prince discusses EU's role in peace process and bilateral relations Jordan signs two agreements of cooperation with Italy

By Francesca Ciriaci
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

ROME — "Soft" or "flexible" security, the humanitarian dimension of politics and economics, as well as inter-regional cooperation as complementary to intra-regional mechanisms were the focus of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan's meetings with Italian officials here on Monday. The Crown Prince stressed that the current "severe crisis" in the peace process is "a crisis of confidence" and called on Italy and the European Union (EU) to take an active role in creating "a suitable regional environment in which no state feels threatened."

As opposed to "hard security," which entails the use of military means, the "soft or flexible security" the Crown Prince envisages would be based on crisis prevention mechanisms, as well as diplomacy and systems facilitating the peaceful solution of international and regional controversies. "We believe that cooperation on the economic and human levels is closely interconnected to the security dimension."

To this end, Jordan has been engaged in dialogue with a range of security oriented European institutions," the Crown Prince said, noting that "Jordan is moving towards observer status in the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and to become a partner to the OSCE initiative in the Mediterranean dialogue."

Furthermore, "following an invitation by NATO, Jordan participated in a political and security dialogue with NATO," the Crown Prince said, "and plans to send more Jordanians to attend NATO training courses."

U.S. ambassador says Israeli, Palestinian trust is shattered

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — A U.S. diplomat's blunt assessment that the Oslo peace process has collapsed heightened concerns Monday that Washington was readying to pull back from its so far fruitless effort to revive Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. Amid Israeli and Palestinian demands for more direct U.S. intervention to save the peace process, U.S. Ambassador Martin Indyk told businessmen in Tel Aviv late Sunday that "the core bargain of Oslo has broken down."

He said the Oslo process — a three-year-old trail of agreements designed to progressively extend self-rule to the Palestinians — had run aground due to mistrust between Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and the Israeli government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

"Israel was promised security and the Palestinians were promised self-government," Mr. Indyk said, noting that both sides had seen their aspirations frustrated during the year since Mr. Netanyahu came to power. Peace talks broke down and violent Palestinian protests erupted in March

after Israel began building a new Jewish settlement in Arab east Jerusalem — part of a broader programme of expanding Jewish settlements on Arab land occupied by Israel since 1967. Repeated U.S. attempts to bring the two sides back together — including a 10-day mission this month by special U.S. envoy Dennis Ross — have failed as the Palestinians insist Israel first halt all Jewish building on lands they hope to include in a future state while Mr. Netanyahu demands Mr. Arafat first crack down on anti-Israeli violence.

All 12 presidents of professional associations will resign if government does not reverse Press and Publications Law

By Amy Henderson
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — In a further escalation of protest over the recently-introduced Press and Publications Law, the council of the Jordanian Professional Associations Monday announced that the presidents of all 12 professional associations would resign from their posts as of next Saturday unless the government rescinds the amendments.

"We find the attitude of the government towards limiting the freedom of expression of citizens, as well as the activities of the professional associations, and the government's dealings with issues of general public interest completely unacceptable... and unbearable," said Bassem Dajani, president of the Jordan Medical Association.

The council convened yesterday afternoon during a special session to discuss options available to counter the law introduced last Saturday. The amendments to the 1993 Press and Publications Law further strengthen substantial restrictions on journalists and editors in practising their profession.

Amendments to the law extend the list of issues that cannot be covered, and levy heavy penalties against offenders: JD15,000-25,000. A clause allowing courts to close papers found in violation of the law also places the government in full control as to when the publication is reinstated.

Additional amendments require daily newspapers to raise their capital to a minimum of JD600,000 and weeklies to a minimum of JD300,000. Papers must adjust their financial situation in three months or face closure.

This clause, journalists say, is levelled specifically at the weekly tabloid press, long a government irritant. The weeklies' inability to meet the capital require-

ment, they say, will literally crush the weekly tabloid industry. "We (the presidents of the professional associations) represent more than a half a million citizens," said Mr. Dajani during an interview with the Jordan Times following the close of the meeting.

Israeli prison guards attack 300 Palestinian detainees

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli prison authorities used tear gas to put down a demonstration by nearly 300 Palestinian detainees protesting the lengthening of their internment, a human rights group said Monday.

The incident occurred last Thursday in Megiddo Prison north of Tel Aviv, where some 280 Palestinians are held without trial, said Khalida Jarar, executive director of Al Damir, a Palestinian group monitoring prisoner rights.

Prison guards ordered the detainees to return from the prison yard to their tents in the evening, then attacked the tents with "large amounts of tear-gas," prisoners told Al Damir lawyers. The raid went on until dawn and "left 90 per cent of the prisoners overcome by gas. Three had to be taken to hospital outside the prison," Ms. Jarar said.

Israeli navy kills man in boat off Lebanon

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Israel said its navy killed a guerrilla in a boat off Lebanon heading for an attack Monday in the Jewish state.

Security sources said an explosion occurred on the fishing boat after coast guards opened fire from the patrol boat about two kilometres off Lebanon's coast around 5:30 a.m. Timor Goksel, spokesman for the United Nations peacekeeping force in Lebanon, said fishermen may have been on the boat with dynamite which they use to catch fish.

"This morning an attempted terrorist attack... was thwarted by a navy boat which was on routine patrol north of Rosh Hanigra (in northern Israel). During the incident a guerrilla was killed," said an army spokesman. He said he was checking reports of an explosion on the boat. The Jewish state occupies a 15-kilometre wide zone in southern Lebanon.

Turkey to continue 'neutralising' Kurdish rebels in northern Iraq

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkey's much-criticised military incursion in northern Iraq against Turkish Kurdish separatists will continue until the Turkish Kurds have been "neutralised" and the area is under the control of Iraqi Kurdistan leader Massoud Barzani, the Foreign Ministry said here Sunday.

Over 1,100 members of the Kurdistan Labour Party (PKK) have been killed in the joint operation between the Turkish army and forces of Mr. Barzani's Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP). Turkish military sources said Monday.

This included 96 killed Saturday in heavy fighting in the Sinath and Zap regions, the sources said, cited by the semi-official Anatolia news agency. A statement Sunday from Turkish Foreign Minister Omer Akbel, cited by Anatolia, said the ground and air assault launched Wednesday, involving 10,000 Turkish troops, targeted neither the Iraqi authorities nor civilians in the region.



Journalists protesting the new Press and Publications Law hold a famous cartoon drawn by the late Naji Ali on Monday at a sit-in organised by the Jordan Press Association. The cartoon depicts 'Handala' (with his back turned) saying "I liked your article today on democracy - what are you writing for tomorrow?" the journalist answers "My will" (Photo by Yousef Allam)

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Senior Syrian officials brief Saudi, Kuwaiti leaders on peace process, Turkish incursion into north Iraq

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Syria's vice president and foreign minister arrived in Kuwait from Saudi Arabia Monday to discuss the Middle East peace process and tension in the region, officials said.

Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam and Foreign Minister Farouq Sharaa were on a visit due to last a few hours, a Kuwaiti official said, asking not to be identified.

Mr. Khaddam was carrying a letter from Syrian President Hafez Assad to Kuwaiti Emir Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, the official Kuwait news agency KUNA reported before their arrival.

The Syrian officials were to hold talks with acting

Prime Minister Sheikh Subah Al Ahmad Al Sabah on "the difficulties which the peace process is encountering and movements in the region which Syria considers extremely dangerous," KUNA said.

A Syrian diplomat in Riyadh, which Mr. Sharaa and Mr. Khaddam visited before Kuwait, said that Damascus is concerned about Turkey's military incursion into northern Iraq.

Some 10,000 Turkish troops crossed the border with Iraq Wednesday to strike at Turkish Kurd separatists from the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

The official Saudi news agency SPA said the two Syrian officials met King Fahd in Riyadh and gave

him a message from Syrian President Hafez Assad.

They discussed the "difficulties in the peace process" and "developments in the region which Syria believes is very dangerous," a Syrian diplomat said in reference to Turkey's military incursion into northern Iraq.

Some 10,000 Turkish troops crossed the border with Iraq on Wednesday to strike at Turkish Kurd separatists from the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), Turkish military sources said Sunday almost 1,000 PKK fighters had been killed.

Syria is concerned by the fighting which is taking place near the Syrian border, an Arab diplomat in Riyadh said.

As a result Syrian leaders,

who are also concerned by Turkey's military pact with Israel, are trying to build a strong Arab front against Ankara, the diplomat said.

On the peace process, Mr. Khaddam and Mr. Sharaa told Saudi leaders they believed that the United States "is not operating any serious initiative" on either the Israeli-Syrian or Israeli-Palestinian tracks, the diplomat said.

They asked Saudi Arabia, a U.S. ally, to persuade the United States to do more to break the deadlock in the peace process.

Mr. Sharaa arrived here from Qatar, which has refused to heed Arab calls to cancel a Middle East economic conference planned for Doha in November

Qadhafi says his flights meant to defy U.S.

CAIRO (AP) — Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi said Sunday that he flew to Niger and Nigeria this month to show the United States that U.N. sanctions had not isolated his country.

The Security Council banned flights from Libya in 1992 to force the surrender of two Libyans wanted in the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am jetliner over Lockerbie, Scotland, which killed 270 people.

But Libya has repeatedly violated the ban, most recently on May 8 when the

Libyan leader flew to Niger then later to Nigeria. The United Nations has yet to take action, but the United States criticised Niger and Nigeria for letting Colonel Qadhafi land.

"I wanted to reaffirm by real action and not by words like the Americans do that Libya is not isolated," Col. Qadhafi told a rally of thousands at a stadium in the Libyan capital Tripoli.

"On the contrary, the Libyan people have the full support of the people of the

world for their courage, for their honour and for their steadfastness," he said in remarks carried by the Libyan news agency JANA, which is monitored in Cairo.

Col. Qadhafi boasted that the flight was in defiance of U.S. wishes.

"This is an answer to America, which has gloated in past years that Libya is isolated," he said.

Col. Qadhafi also criticised Turkey's incursion into northern Iraq. He said that while the United States

protects Iraqi Kurds in northern Iraq, it has done nothing to help Turkish Kurds.

In a sign of Libya's anger, a Turkish construction company was barred from taking part in Libya's ambitious plan to bring water from aquifers in the Sahara desert to the coastal cities of Tripoli and Benghazi, Egypt's Middle East News Agency reported.

It said the decision was announced Sunday but gave no details.

Israeli crackdown on drive-test racket

HAIFA (AFP) — Police have arrested more than a dozen state driving examiners in northern Israel in a crackdown on an alleged corrupt driving test ring that has been dubbed the "licence to kill" scandal.

A police spokesman said 13 driving examiners, near-

ly a third of all state testers in the north of the country, had been detained along with five driving instructors in Haifa and several other towns and cities. The examiners are suspected of taking bribes from instructors to pass their students in theory and driving tests.

The students in turn paid \$400 to \$700 more than normal driving school fees to the instructors, sometimes without being aware of the bribes paid to examiners, police said.

Police said thousands of drivers had obtained unearned driving licences

through the ring over the past six years and many had been involved in fatal automobile accidents.

"Thousands of drivers are out there on Israeli roads with a licence to kill," Northern Israel Police Commander Nitzav Alit Ron told reporters.

Iran is younger, more urban since revolution, but economic woes rife

By Christophe de Roquefeuil
AFP

TEHRAN — Iran is a younger and more cosmopolitan society than it was before the 1979 Islamic revolution, but faces deep economic hardship.

The revolution attempted to turn the country into a more religious society, but it also unleashed a range of political forces, from radical leftwing Islamic students to ultra-conservative Shiite Muslim clerics.

Iran's population has doubled in the past two decades to around 64 million, reflecting a push by conservatives in the aftermath of the revolution for more childbirth in line with traditional values — and a government too preoccupied with the 1980-1988 war with Iraq to worry about over-population.

Although no statistics are available on Iran's urban residents in 1979, the number of people living in cities today is well over half the total population.

Eighteen years ago, the capital Tehran was the only city living up to the international standards, but Iran now possesses at least four other cosmopolitan cities — Mashhad, Esfahan, Shiraz and Tabriz — all with enormous riches and potential for further growth.

But Western-sounding names of public places — such as streets, freeways, and restaurants — have been changed to traditional ones — often those of Muslim leaders or scholars.

In Tehran, Eisenhower Avenue is now Revolution Avenue, Kennedy Square is Tohid (monotheism) and Queen Elizabeth Boulevard has become Fartners Boulevard.

The authorities have also tried to eradicate foreign words and expressions from the national language. First, although many people seek to learn English in private schools to stay abreast of developments in the outside world or to seek better job opportunities.

More than half of the population was born after the revolution and has no memory of life under the shah, other than what they have been told through official propaganda.

This young population is a source of growing concern for the regime.

Having managed to root out internal dissent it has now shifted its energy to fighting the influence of "decadent" Western culture into the Islamic republic and protect Islamic values.

Iranian children today get a little of both.

At school they are required to learn the Koran and are constantly subjected to religious and ideological indoctrination, but they can also watch Walt Disney's Tom and Jerry cartoon programme on television.

State-run radio and television have tried, often in vain, to produce attractive programmes to woo the young away from Western entertainment broadcast via satellite dishes and Hollywood movies shown on underground video.

All these efforts for change and progress are mainly financed by oil revenues, although average personal income has sharply declined from \$2,500 in 1979 to \$1,700 today, according to official figures.

Independent Western sources put per capita income at around \$600.

The Islamic republic has had little success in easing dependence on oil, and crude exports make up about 80 per cent of the country's hard currency earnings. Carpet-making and production of pistachio nuts and caviar are other viable sectors, but the income generated is far less.

In an impoverished and over-crowded bureaucracy, government employees often have to work two or three jobs or moonlight as taxi drivers to make ends meet.

Many people also feel threatened by the government's economic liberalisation programme of recent years, as they previously relied on heavy government subsidies on such items as gasoline, medicine and bread to survive.

The price of both bread and gas has sharply increased in the past two years, triggering soaring inflation.

But the regime continues to stage ritual demonstrations to show its popularity and it uses "martyrdom" to ensure the youth's loyalty, as it did during the war against Iraq.

But as a riot two years ago in a poor Tehran suburb showed, the young population could become a time bomb if its problems remain unaddressed.

Iranian women, long struggling to break out of the traditional bondage imposed on them by a strict society, are quietly making inroads as they become increasingly vital to the country's economy.

From computer technicians and television presenters in cities to rice planters along the lush green coast of the Caspian Sea, women are strongly present in Iran's economy and public life.

In a society caught between traditional values and the demands of modern living, women in black chador robes, which cover them head to toe, are seen daily crowded in the rear

Women lead revolution behind veil

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From computer technicians and television presenters in cities to rice planters along the lush green coast of the Caspian Sea, women are strongly present in Iran's economy and public life.

In a society caught between traditional values and the demands of modern living, women in black chador robes, which cover them head to toe, are seen daily crowded in the rear

section of buses in Tehran and other big cities, going between home and work.

Men occupy the front of the buses in line with efforts here to segregate the sexes.

In the cities, women can wait until around 20 to be wed. The situation is different in the countryside, however, where many girls are forced by their parents to get married as soon as they reach puberty.

Polygamy, once frequent in Iranian society, even before the 1979 Islamic revolution which toppled the pro-Western shah, is becoming increasingly rare, partly because of a growing awareness among women of their rights, but also due to

the current economic hardship.

Although the Islamic republic has not outlawed the practice of polygamy, it does not encourage it, amid earnest efforts here to improve women's lot in the male-dominated society and their position within their families.

A French study said last November that the size of the average Iranian family had shrunk considerably in the last decade, in large part because women were using contraceptives and that male sterilisation was encouraged.

Still, many women in remote villages do not have much say about family planning, with their husbands deciding on the number of children they should have or refusing to share responsibility for birth control.

The 1980-1988 war against Iraq gave a sharp boost to the number of women taking on social responsibility as they were often obliged to work to support their family on their own as their husbands were fighting in the front.

Economic problems have also been crucial. "Religious authorities would have preferred women to stay at home, but today a family can not live on a single income" said Fatemeh, the owner of a beauty shop.

Despite their greater participation, women are still subjected to restrictive measures and they lag behind men in social progress, as the power establishment vacillates on whether to keep them indoors or prod them into social activity.

While Iranian women have the right to vote and drive, they are barred from getting married without the consent of their father or travelling abroad without permission from their husbands.

Hotels are often reluctant to host women if they are not accompanied by close male relatives.

Still, women can work as attorneys and government administrators, although they are not yet allowed to be judges in Islamic courts of law and their testimonies are worth half of that of men.

Female sports, zealously advocated by Faezeh Hashemi, the daughter of President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, is a scene of unending battle between moderates and conservatives struggling hard to survive.

In a reluctant compromise, the authorities have allowed women to practise sports in public if they are fully covered according to the Islamic dress code. That means only certain sports, such as horseback-riding, skiing, shooting and archery.

Women have also entered politics with 13 seats in the 270-member parliament and government posts as a district mayor and a deputy health minister.

But the experience before the May 23 presidential election showed there are limits to the opening. Although nine women signed up to contest the polls, none of them were approved to run.

However, the candidates, eager not to lose the vote of half of the population, have promised to improve women's status and give them more important posts in their government.

But Iranian leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei last week admonished the contenders against going too far to woo women's votes.

"Why do some talk of women in the manner incompatible with Islam and from a Western point of view," he complained.



Iranian supporters of former Iranian Culture Minister Mohammad Khatami on Monday distribute his picture in a Tehran street. Mr. Khatami, a moderate cleric, is running for presidential election due 23 May. Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati threw his weight behind Parliamentary Speaker Ali Akbar Nategh-Nuri for his bid for presidency and said he would vote for him. Mr. Nuri, backed by conservative clerics, is the most favourite candidate to succeed Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani (AFP photo)

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:35 French Programmes
16:00 Super Sports Folies
16:30 Dog House
17:10 The Album Show
18:00 French Programmes
19:00 News in French
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 Couch
20:00 Doc — Tilt
20:30 Encounter
21:10 Doc — Nature of Things
22:00 News in English
22:25 Snowy River
23:00 Mission Impossible

PRAYER TIMES

04:01 Fajr
05:31 Sunrise/Duha
12:32 Dhuhur
16:13 Asr
19:33 Maghrob
21:03 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swedish, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church
Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation
Tel. 632440
De la Salle Church Tel.
681757
Terra Sancta Church Tel.
622366
Anglican Church Tel. 652826
Armenian Catholic Church
Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church
Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel.
771751
Armenian International Church
Tel. 652526
Evangelical Lutheran Church
Tel. 824328
German-speaking Evangelical
Congregation Tel. 845457
The Latter-Day Saints Tel.
654932
Church of Nazareth Tel.
675691
The Evangelical Local Church
in Amman Tel. 811295
English-speaking
Lutheran Catholics Parish Tel.
614190

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology
Temperatures are expected to drop gradually becoming around average with winds northwesterly moderate. In Aqaba, it will be hot and dusty, winds northerly moderate and seas calm.
Amman17/29
Aqaba21/35
Deserts16/33
Jordan Valley20/55
Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 32, Aqaba 36 Humidity readings: Amman 35 per cent, Aqaba 27 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Ayman Al Muhtaseb 875748
Dr. Jamal Jbarah 847351
Dr. Abbas Al Hakim 885446
Dr. Arafat Al Ashhab 602507
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asema pharmacy 637055
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672
Najib pharmacy 847632
IRBID:
Dr. Ghazi Ta'ameh 250080
Al Quds pharmacy (—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Ya'coub Al Khatib 991772
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417
EMERGENCIES
Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Dept 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (direct-

tory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 0853200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity 644281/6
Alsieh Maternity 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 607071
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845

Al-Muasher Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3
Al-Bashir 775111/26
Army, Marika 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199

ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)883323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)86732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)990990
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275
Ibn Al Nafes Hospital (02)247100

FOR THE TRAVELLER QUEEN ALIA AIRPORT

ARRIVALS
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
08:00 Damascus (RJ)
08:15 Sanaa (RJ)
10:25 Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:55 Muscat, Dubai (RJ)
11:05 Beirut (RJ)
11:20 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
17:20 Cairo (RJ)
17:30 London (RJ)
17:40 Frankfurt (RJ)
18:30 Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)
00:10 Pau (France) (add) (RJ)

Other Flights
06:05 London, Damascus (BA)
13:00 Riyadh (SV)
14:40 Munich (YP)
18:05 Kiev (LU)
19:15 Dubai, Damascus (EK)
21:10 Cairo (MS)
21:30 Tel Aviv (LY)
22:50 Aden (TY)
23:25 Larnaca (CY)
01:25 Jakarta (GA)
03:00 Rome (AZ)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

07:20 Beirut (RJ)
09:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
12:10 Amsterdam, Montreal, Toronto (RJ)
12:25 Vienna, Frankfurt (RJ)
12:45 Brussels, Paris (RJ)
13:15 Cairo (RJ)
14:00 London (RJ)
19:10 Pau (France) (add) (RJ)
21:20 Larnaca (RJ)
21:20 Jeddah (RJ)
21:40 Damascus (RJ)
22:00 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
22:50 Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)

Other Flights
08:55 Damascus, London (KJ)
04:30 Riyadh (SV)
15:30 Munich (YP)
19:05 Kiev (LU)
20:15 Dubai (EK)
22:30 Cairo (MS)
22:50 Tel Aviv (LY)
23:50 Aden (TY)
01:55 Bucharest (RO)
02:25 London (GA)
02:30 Amsterdam (KL)
04:00 Athens (OA)
04:00 Rome (AZ)

Prince Rashid celebrates 18th birthday

AMMAN (J.T.) — HRH Prince Rashid Al Hassan today celebrates his 18th birthday. Prince Rashid is the youngest of Crown Prince Hassan and Princess Sarvath's four children.

Prince Rashid received his primary education in Jordan at the Amman Baccalaureate School, continued on to Port Regis School in England, and then, following in the footsteps of His Majesty King Hussein and the Crown Prince, he has been at Harrow for the past five years.

The Prince has already obtained 8 GCSE subjects at ordinary level and is currently sitting his advanced level examinations in history, politics, classical civilisation and Arabic. In the autumn he will join the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst before continuing on to university.

At Harrow, Prince Rashid excelled in many sporting and military activities, whilst emulating his father, the Crown Prince,



in being appointed to the prestigious position of Head of House. The Prince has been a

RSM of the school's Combined Services Cadet Corps. During his vacations in Jordan, Prince Rashid has taken part in several military training courses, including obtaining his paratrooper's wings. He enjoys many sports including polo, judo, swimming, scuba diving and rugby, and is captain of Harrow Polo as well as vice-captain and the Independent Schools bronze medalist in judo. He has often represented his schools in public speaking and debate.

Prince Rashid has travelled extensively with Crown Prince Hassan, accompanying him on a number of official trips as well as military visits to Jordanian peacekeeping troops in Bosnia and Croatia. In 1994, Prince Rashid accompanied His Majesty King Hussein to the Islamic summit in Morocco. The Prince has also spent an internship at the Secretariat of the European Commission in Brussels.

Commission calls for redressing imbalance between population growth and resources

AMMAN (J.T.) — The National Population Commission (NPC) Monday warned of rapid population growth in Jordan and called for redressing the imbalance created by this growth in relation to natural resources and social services available in the Kingdom.

NPC Secretary General Nabih Salameh addressed the opening session of a four-day workshop on strategic developments of communication in family planning affairs.

He described Jordan's population as dominated by young people and characterised by population growth rates higher than that of socio-economic development.

This phenomenon, he stated, exhausts the country's natural resources.

The NPC, first established in 1973, seeks to spread public awareness regarding population-related matters, according to Mr. Salameh, as well as the relationship between family and socio-economic welfare.

The workshop focuses on the implementation of a national strategy on family planning.

Mr. Salameh described the NPC as also seeking to coordinate private, official and voluntary organisations in order to enlist their help in planning, managing and executing programmes and projects pertaining to population within the framework of implementing the National Jordanian

Strategy on Family Planning.

The workshop was opened by Minister of Labour Saleh Khasawneh who confirmed that the National Jordanian Population Strategy, endorsed by the Council of Ministers in March of last year, is based on the principles of Islamic Sharia, the Constitution and the National Charter as well as principles of democracy and human rights.

The minister outlined the workshop as designed to help promote maternal and child welfare, family planning and birth spacing.

The workshop, held in conjunction with the Johns Hopkins University in the United States, and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), is designed to utilise mass media to educate and inform the public regarding family planning issues.

Among those attending the opening session were former ministers, members of Parliament, and Islamic religious leaders.

Forty officials representing both official and non-governmental organisations including universities are also in attendance.

This is the second workshop of its kind, the first was held in Amman last October and collected, evaluated and analysed current population trends.

Royal Decrees endorse protocol, agreements

AMMAN (Petra) — A Royal Decree was issued Monday endorsing a financial protocol signed by Jordan and France under which the Kingdom will benefit from a grant totalling \$9.9 million francs (approximately JD 11,160,000) to finance development projects.

Part of the grant will be used to finance the purchase of French services and commodities, connected with improving: the Amman Financial Market, the water network in Wadi

Musa, equipment for the Royal Medical Services, equipment for the intensive care unit at the University of Jordan Hospital, equipment in the neuro-surgical unit at Al Bashir Hospital, equipment for the Department of Meteorology, the radar network at the Queen Alia Airport and the telecommunications switch board in the Ashrafieh district of Amman.

A second Royal Decree was issued Monday concerning the re-organisation of Civil Aviation Authority

(CAA) internal regulations and another Royal Decree approved a Jordanian-Tunisian road transport agreement, signed last year.

A fourth Royal Decree Monday approved an agreement signed last March by the Natural Resources Authority and the Medallion Oil Company for oil prospecting in Jordan.

As stipulated in the eight-year concession agreement, the company will carry out exploration work in three stages.

Jordan looks for ways to supervise children's diet of televised violence

Zeina Durra

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Sex and violence on the small screen remains a problem for television authorities worldwide.

The notion of controlling the contents of television programmes portends the contentious issue of censorship which, in turn, fuels the complex debate of moral values versus freedom of expression. Solutions are hard to come by and the process of trial and error is a long and painful one.

Various countries are testing different methods to exert control over television viewing. Jordan's new rating system, introduced in September of last year, "consists of the symbols: U meaning universal viewing, PG for parental guidance, PGV for parental guidance, PGH for parental guidance, and J18 for [viewing recommended for] those above the age of 18. They are shown at the start of films and mini-series to guide people as to the ensuing content." Director of Jordan Television Nasser Judeh said.

"This new system is an upgraded version of a previous guide that we had for about four or five years," he explained. "Despite this I am aware that some violent scenes escape through the net, especially on Channel Two as we use foreign programmes. We do warn viewers before [airing any] disturbing film footage on the

news."

Jordan Television does not appear to have the problem of explicit sex scenes and nudity, due to strict censorship laws, "sex on television is not a problem as we are not permitted to show any nudity or sex scenes," he explained.

Western countries are also facing this problem. Countries, for example, such as France, have a similar policy when dealing with television violence. Late last year, France introduced a guide of symbols shown in the corner of the television screen of every programme.

This new system undertaken by France Television's public and private channels (excluding Canal Plus which has its own rating system) and the Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel (CSA) consists of three symbols: a green circle, which advises parental guidance, an orange triangle, which stresses that parental guidance is essential, and a red square for strictly adult programmes.

The United States adopts a different approach, abiding by the Telecommunications Act of 1996. Under this act a "V-chip" (V meaning violence), must be installed in television sets by 1998.

The V-chip aims to allow parents to selectively block programmes according to a rating system based on that used for the cinema. These codes appear at the beginning of each programme with the exception of news

and sports items.

"When asked if Jordan intends to install such a system, Mr. Nasser replied, "this may possibly happen at a later stage. It is an extremely advanced approach. Presently, we are not technically equipped to do so but naturally in the future we hope to explore new horizons."

Despite efforts to curb television sex and violence, the system cannot work if parents do not monitor their children's viewing. "There is no substitute for parents looking at programmes either with their child or on their own," said Cree McCree, senior editor of the U.S. Cable Guide and Total TV.

The French have noted that not only must parents follow what their children watch, they must also take into account the symbols shown for the system to be effective. The results of a recent survey reveal that, "61 per cent of television viewers in France do not use the symbols to decide whether to allow their children to watch a programme or not," Dominique Garraud said in a recent press release to the Jordan Times.

Mr. Nasser Judeh also feels strongly about this and according to him the need for parental supervision is indispensable as it is parents who ultimately decide what their children should watch.

Television experts agree that public support is vital if these efforts are to be successful.

By Sacha Baggili

Special to the Jordan Times

COMMUNITY SERVICE has been described by schoolteachers, social service centre staff and students from around the capital, as an essential element of a comprehensive education, necessary for the promotion of greater social awareness amongst youth, instilling a sense of social responsibility and as a practical method of alleviating the suffering of those less fortunate.

Through the "Creativity, Action and Service" (CAS) programme, which exists as an "integral and essential part" of the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum, senior school students at the Amman Baccalaureate School (ABS) undertake various community service activities throughout the academic year on a compulsory basis.

According to ABS Headmistress Samia Farra, the philosophy behind this programme is based on a belief that there is more to education than academic achievement.

A document detailing the CAS programme stresses the importance of a student's "personal and social development" in "complementing academic and intellectual development."

Coordinator of the CAS programme Abdel Razzaq Najjar explained that students are free to choose the sort of activity with which they feel most comfortable, and that most students complete more hours of community service than the school programme requires.

At a session of horseback riding for the disabled, one CAS activity which students may choose to pursue, this reporter observed the interaction between physically disabled children from Al Hussein Society for the Physically Handicapped (AHPH) and ABS students who assisted in the activity.

"Our children enjoy the company of these students more than anything, they always ask about [the ABS students]," Head of the



Students at the Amman Baccalaureate School (ABS) undertake various community service activities throughout the academic year on a compulsory basis, most students complete more hours of community service than the school programme requires.

AHPH Occupational Therapy Department Buthaina Herzalla explained, "Personal relationships build up during their activities."

"We always joke together when we are here," said Ali, one of the children benefiting from the society's programmes.

The ABS students agreed. "It's a two-way thing, we learn a lot from people we meet at orphanages and social centres, it broadens our minds and makes us think about issues from which we may have otherwise been sheltered," explained Khaled Saraf, president of the ABS student council.

"We all know that there is a big gap between the rich and the poor in this country," he added. "Personal contact should be promoted to affect the values, actions and decisions of young people."

"I think that it's a good idea to expand education in this way [to counter] ignorant views and reactions," another student, Noor, said. Staff at social centres in Amman told the Jordan Times that students from universities, private and public schools do visit their institutions offering practical help and moral support, but that this [type of concrete action] needs to be encouraged further.

"Students from the University of Jordan, Amman Private University, the Orthodox School and Jubilee School, as well as the ABS, have been assisting us in some of our projects and working side by side with the children here, but this [aid] comes inconsistently," according to Haifa Fanous, activities director for the SOS Village.

"When such students first come to the village they find it strange, but good relationships develop between them and the children living here," she stated. "It's a good experience for all."

"There should be a compulsory programme for all schools in the country to bring privileged youth into contact with the sort of members of society that we provide for here," asserted Hilda Rubash, a member of the committee at the National Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Mentally Handicapped. "It helps them to develop emotionally, and we desperately need extra help."

Deputy Head of the National Orthodox School in Amman Azmi Shahin argued that obligating students to perform community activities as a compul-

ry part of a school curriculum would be an inappropriate way of promoting a sense of social responsibility amongst students.

"Although our students oversee various charity activities through the year, as well as [engage in field work] at social centres if they choose, I don't believe in a compulsory programme for community service as children of this age are likely to resent [the obligation]."

Two students from another private school in Amman expressed regret that their school, "although" very good academically, "does not offer the dimension of social education which they believe is crucial for a generation coming of age 'in a country in which 22 per cent of the population lives under the poverty line.'"

"We are instructed on morals and ethics in religion classes, but we're given no opportunity to develop a wider perspective on life and break out of our [protective] shells," said Nabil.

"Our student council tries to [engage in social assistance] but it should be [mandated] by the administration, we can't do everything," Dalia, another student, concurred.

WHAT'S GOING ON

FILM

* Palestinian film: "The Tale of the Three Pearls" at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman at 7:00 p.m.

LECTURES

* "The Process of Translating Greek Scientific Texts" by Professor George Saliba at the British Council, Jabal Amman at 6:00 p.m.
* Open discussion with painter Farouk Lambaz about his artistic works at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh at 6:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Exhibition of works by Farouk Lambaz at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, until June 19. Also displaying works by Paris-based Moroccan artist Najia Mahadi, until June 12, as well as showing an exhibition by architectural photographer Said Nuseibah entitled "The Farthest Mosque" and by contemporary Arab artists.

* Works by Mimir Al-Ubaidi at Hamourabi Art Gallery, Gardens Street (Tel. 5536098), until May 31.
* Paintings by French-Lebanese artist Claire Cheval-Jean at Orient Gallery, Issam Ajlouni Street (Tel. 681303/4), until May 29.

* Photography exhibition by Samer Bqayeen at the Cervantes Institute, Jabal Amman, until May 31.
* Spring exhibition '97 entitled "Spring is Blooming" at the Jordan River Designs (Tel. 613061/2), until May 31.

* Works by Omar Shahwan at Offici Art Gallery, Um Uthaina (Tel. 5526932), until May 29.
* Works by Issam Tantawi at Alia Art Gallery, Jabal Amman, until May 29.

* "The Water of Deserts" at Natural Resources Authority until May 22.

* Display of caricature drawings by Imad Hajjaj at Balqa Art Gallery, Fuhais, until May 25.

* Photo exhibition entitled "Fragments" by Wa'ed Al Masri at The Gallery, Hotel InterContinental, Jabal Amman until May 22.

* Display of paintings, sculptures, mosaic, ceramics, works, jewellery and food products of Dana Valley at the Embassy of Pakistan, Jabal Weibdeh, until May 23.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Premier meets with visiting chairman

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Monday met with visiting Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Gulf Technical Institution Riad Shueibi. Discussion centred on media project investments in the Kingdom. Minister of State for Information Affairs Samir Mutawi attended the discussion. Also Monday, the prime minister discussed financial and banking issues with former Executive President of the Arab Banking Institution Abdullah Saoudi and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Housing Bank Zuhair Khouri.

Students taken to hospital

MAFRAQ (Petra) — Twenty-five female students from Umm Al Nee'am School were Monday admitted to Al Mafraq Hospital after consuming white cheese. Mafraq Hospital Director General Yussef Tahat described the students as in stable condition. Mafraq Governor Ahmad Lawzi visited the hospital and requested the removal of all cheese from the governorate's schools.

Bank approves grant of 33 loans

AMMAN (Petra) — The board of the Industrial Development Bank (IDB) Monday approved a grant of 33 loans, worth JD8.2 million, for financing industrial and tourism projects. Twenty-three loans have been allocated for industrial purposes and ten for those related to tourism.

Citizen donates land to RSCN

IRBID (Petra) — Abdullah Nabhan, from Al Kura district in Irbid, Monday donated a piece of land to the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN). RSCN Director General Anis Muasher thanked Mr. Nabhan for this "noble gesture."

Drop in temperature expected

AMMAN (Petra) — The Department of Meteorology forecast calls for hot weather with winds north-westerly moderate. On Tuesday and Wednesday, a drop in temperature will take place with the maximum temperature expected to decrease to 29.

Chirac praises Yeltsin, stresses French role in NATO accord

MOSCOW (R) — French President Jacques Chirac met Boris Yeltsin in Moscow Sunday and afterwards praised the Russian leader's "personal victory" in reaching an accord with NATO and affirmed France's role in making the deal possible.

Describing the planned signing of the NATO-Russia founding act in Paris on May 27 as "historic," Mr. Chirac said all difficulties between the two sides had been resolved.

The French leader, whose hosting of the signing ceremony has been taken as a mark of his determination to be seen playing a major role in European security reforms, met Mr. Yeltsin during a brief stopover on his return from a visit to China.

"There will be a historic signing of the Russia-NATO accord, which will both erase Yalta and con-

firm peace on our continent for the future," Mr. Chirac told reporters, referring to the Yalta Agreement, which divided Europe between Soviet and Western spheres of influence at the end of World War II.

Asked if there were any remaining problems with the treaty, announced by Russian and NATO negotiators in Moscow last week, the French leader said: "I think no ambiguity remains."

Under the deal, Moscow, which has strongly opposed NATO plans to admit former Soviet-Bloc countries in Eastern Europe, will gain a say in the alliance's decisions and assurances the West will not move nuclear weapons closer to Russia's borders.

A Kremlin statement said the meeting was held in "a spirit of openness and mutu-

al understanding." Talks focused on the treaty signing but also touched on bilateral ties, it said.

Mr. Chirac, outspoken among Western leaders in warning against isolating Russia, praised Mr. Yeltsin for defending his corner but also claimed a share of the credit for persuading the Western allies to go some way to addressing Moscow's concerns.

"It's a great success for Russia and it's a success that is due to the firm determination of President Yeltsin, who wanted Russia, naturally, to have its full role as great power in the new organisation of the peace," Mr. Chirac said.

"A year and a half, two years ago, Russia felt a bit humiliated or threatened and that was not acceptable," said Mr. Chirac, who came to power in May

1995.

The treaty was "a great victory for Russia" and "a personal victory for President Yeltsin." But France could claim some of the credit for concluding the treaty, Mr. Chirac said.

"We... explained to our partners in NATO and to our American partners that a peace and security accord for Europe was first of all conditional on an accord between NATO and Russia and so we did all we could to facilitate this negotiation," he said.

Mr. Chirac last visited Moscow on Feb. 2. His two-hour stopover Sunday coincided with his wife Bernadette's birthday. Mr. Yeltsin marked the event by giving her a traditional lacquered and painted box from the Russian village of Palekh.



Russian President Boris Yeltsin (right) hugs his French counterpart Jacques Chirac prior to their meeting outside Moscow Monday. Mr. Chirac, who made a brief stopover on his way back from China, praised an agreement between Russia and NATO due to be signed in Paris on May 27 (Reuters photo)

Conservative Canadian leader shines in third candidates' debate

OTTAWA (AFP) — The thorny question of national unity dominated the third and final televised debate late Sunday among the heads of Canada's five parliamentary parties in the run-up to the June 2 general election.

Progressive Conservative Party chief Jean Charest used the debate — which was held in French — to tell voters he was the candidate most able to save Canada from a political climate of "uncertainty and conflict."

The popular Conservative leader also said that not only could he solve the problems Canada has faced over the last few years, but that they had created them.

Mr. Charest — who has been rising in opinion polls,

particularly in Quebec — dismissed Prime Minister Jean Chretien as a "supporter of the status quo" and sharply criticised Gilles Duceppe's Bloc Quebecois as "a kind of black hole."

Mr. Duceppe wants Quebec to become an independent French-speaking state.

Mr. Charest sought to win the support of the same "soft" nationalist constituency that made up the Conservatives' electoral base when they were in power from 1984 to 1993, and whose support of the Bloc Quebecois appears to be eroding.

But Mr. Duceppe defended himself ably throughout the debate, particularly as his opponents sought to make him say that there would be no future referen-

da on Quebec independence.

"That is not up to me: It is up to the people of Quebec and only the people of Quebec to determine their future," he said.

Liberal Party leader Chretien went on the defensive after a reporter asked him if he were the right man for the job, replying he would rather "solve one problem at a time" and avoid making "big plans."

Commentators agreed that the debate, which comes at the end of a three-day weekend, has done little to change the minds of voters.

The Liberal Party remains ahead in the polls with a 40 per cent support, followed by the Progressive Conservatives with 25 per cent.

U.K. police to probe bribe claims against Labour MP

LONDON (R) — Britain's ruling Labour Party has ordered a police investigation into allegations that one of its new members of parliament bribed rivals in the May 1 general election.

"The allegations made are a matter of serious concern," said Scottish Secretary Donald Dewar, announcing an "immediate and rigorous" legal investigation.

Mohammad Sarwar, who became Britain's first Muslim member of parliament when he won the Glasgow constituency of Govan, strongly denied claims made in Sunday's News Of The World newspaper that he offered bribes to a political opponent.

"The allegations about me in today's newspapers are totally false. Therefore, in addition to cooperating with any police investigation, I

will be consulting my lawyers tomorrow about taking out a writ for defamation," he said in a statement.

The News Of The World alleged that Mr. Sarwar paid £5,000 (\$8,000) to independent Labour candidate Islam Bader, also a Muslim, to get him to ease off campaigning so as not to split both the Labour and Asian vote.

A second Govan candidate later told Sky News that he too had been offered money ahead of the election. Peter Paton, who stood as an unofficial Labour candidate, said he had written to police with details of his allegation.

"I wish to make a formal complaint about an attempted bid by a senior Govan Labour Party activist in March 1997, prior to the election, to compromise me through a third party to

accept a financial inducement towards my election campaign with the intention of destroying my political credibility," Mr. Paton wrote.

The bribery allegations cast the first shadow over Prime Minister Tony Blair's government, which was helped to its election victory by charges of financial and sexual impropriety involving Conservative politicians.

Scottish police have already been investigating allegations over late voter registrations in the Govan constituency, which Mr. Sarwar won by 2,914 votes.

Mr. Sarwar, 46, moved to Scotland from Pakistan at the age of four. He built up a successful cash and carry business and has been involved in the Labour Party for more than 10 years.

Mongolian president ousted in polls

ULAN BATOR (R) — The candidate of Mongolia's former Communist Opposition People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP) has been elected president, ousting the incumbent who stood with government backing, party officials said Monday.

"(Natsagiin) Bagabandi has won the elections," said a spokesman for the MPRP. Mr. Bagabandi, 47, dealt a stunning blow to President Punsalmaagin Ochirbat, the candidate of the ruling Democratic Union Coalition, winning 115 constituencies out of 119. His overall support was more than 60 per cent with almost all votes counted, the spokesman said.

Coalition party officials conceded defeat and a coalition spokesman said Mr. Ochirbat was believed to have garnered about 30 per cent of the vote.

Election Committee officials said voter turnout was estimated at about 78.2 per cent out of the 1.1 million eligible voters in the sprawling land of the steppes.

Speaking after casting his vote, the Soviet-educated Bagabandi said that if elected president he would cooperate with all parties but also pledged to try to slow down government reforms that have created widespread economic dislocation.

"If I become president, I will follow the saying 'be hard to what is wrong and soft on what is right'," Mr. Bagabandi said. "I will work and direct my efforts towards making the state work like a real state."

Mongolia's president is mainly a figurehead, but has the power to veto proposed legislation once, thus enabling him to slow down, but not to block, the passage of laws. Diplomats and foreign observers described the polls as fair.

The size of Mr. Bagabandi's victory according to the preliminary results far exceeded pre-election opinion polls by the Sant Maal Centre, a local think tank, that gave the challenger 51 per cent of the vote to the president's 44 per cent.

Mr. Ochirbat, 55, who won Mongolia's first direct presidential election in June 1993 as an opposition candidate after he was dumped by the then-ruling MPRP, had promised to continue his drive for democracy.

He had also pledged to eradicate poverty in a country where at least one in five Mongolians lives below the official poverty line with an income of \$10 a month.

However, Mr. Bagabandi's pledge to slow reforms and to help those left jobless as Mongolia moves to a market economy from Stalinist central planning appeared to have held far greater voter appeal.

The popularity of the incumbent had slipped in the run-up to the elections due to public anger at the nation's economic woes, including rising unemployment and inflation.

The ruling Democrats have implemented tough reforms since they won a stunning 50 of the 76 seats in parliament in elections last June to take power after 75 years of rule by Mongolia's Communists and their heirs.

Mr. Bagabandi, educated in Odessa and a specialist in food technology, has worked his way through the party hierarchy, becoming secretary of the MPRP Central Committee from 1990 to 1992 and deputy chairman and parliament speaker from 1992 to 1996.

He took over as party chairman shortly after the MPRP's election defeat.

500,000 flee as cyclone batters Bangladesh coast

DHAKA (R) — Bangladesh ordered a disaster alert and evacuated half a million people Monday as a cyclone pounded the country's flat coastal region, threatening major economic damage, officials said.

The cyclone roaring in from the Bay of Bengal ripped across the Bangladesh coast at Cox's Bazar and Teknaf, the country's southernmost tip, at 150 kph.

Bangladesh earlier went on a virtual "war footing," according to one official in the relief ministry, and the prime minister cancelled a trip abroad.

Preliminary reports said no lives were lost in the first impact. Bangladesh's worst cyclone in 1991 killed at least 138,000 people, and left millions homeless.

"Latest radar readings say the windspeed has already reached between 100 and 150 kph. The worst-hit area so far has been Teknaf where a two-metre tidal surge triggered by the cyclone has inundated many villages," one official told Reuters.

Authorities warned that the core of the cyclone was expected to hit the mainland in early afternoon and take several hours to cross the Bangladesh coast towards Burma's Akyab region.

They fear high seas will inundate large low-lying areas in the disaster-prone South Asian country.

Rice crops and shrimp beds are likely to be affected, according to agriculture officials.

"There are no significant crops, except for some rice, in the fields now but shrimp cultivation may be badly affected," said M.A. Wadud, chairman of Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation.

The country earned \$265 million through exporting shrimps in 1995-96, Masudur Rahman, a senior Fishery Ministry official, told Reuters.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina cancelled a planned trip to Spain Sunday night as the government put the army and navy on high alert for emergency rescue and relief operations.

Bangladesh radio said the maximum windspeed of the cyclone would be around 200 kmh.

Coastal areas could be swamped by a tidal surge up to 5 metres high, it said.

Over 33,000 Red Crescent and other volunteers have evacuated about half a million people to cyclone shelters, officials said.

Over 160,000 people were moved to shelters in Cox's Bazar district alone.

Air force planes from Chittagong base were moved to Dhaka while the navy sent vessels to safety.

But a weather official in Chittagong said that the cyclone might hit the coast "at a lesser ferocity."

"The impact of the cyclone may not be as severe as was feared," Admiral Hossain, regional director of Meteorology Department in the port city, told Reuters.

Fishermen have been warned not to leave port and coastal officials told to hoist "great danger" signals.

Dozens of ships berthed at Chittagong and Mongla ports were moved to outer anchorages, port officials said.

"We are taking this precaution so the ships do not collide during the storm and jam the channel by sinking," said Chittagong Port Harbourmaster Quamrul Islam.

State-run radio and television broadcast frequent storm warnings.

Military lieutenants reportedly revolt against Afghan warlord

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — Military commanders of Afghan Uzbek warlord Abdul Rashid Dostum staged a revolt Monday against Gen. Dostum at his stronghold in northern Afghanistan, the Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) said.

The commanders rebelled in support of the Taliban Islamic militia which controls much of the country, said the Pakistan-based private Afghan Information Service.

Gen. Dostum is based at the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif.

There was no independent confirmation of the report which said the revolt was led by Commander Abdul Malik, brother of Rasul Pehlawan, a commander assassinated in the northern region last year.

The agency, which operates from the northwestern Pakistani city of Peshawar, did not give details.

Officials at the Taliban embassy here said they were unaware of the reported rebellion. Gen. Dostum's representatives in Islamabad were not available for comment.

Meanwhile, military sources said Sunday the Taliban forces are massing in central Afghanistan in preparation for a major assault on the north of the country.

Taliban commanders on their way to frontlines some 80 kilometres northwest of the Afghan capital said the militia were preparing for a massive attack on opposition positions.

The remote Ghorband Valley is one of the routes through the Hindu Kush Mountains the militia must take to capture the north of the country.

"God willing, we will reach Bamiyan soon, and then Mazar-i-Sharif. When you have God behind you the mountains are no problem," exclaimed Commander Waqil.

The mountain town of Bamiyan, situated only 60 kilometres from current Taliban positions, is the stronghold of the opposition Shiite Muslim faction Hezb-e-Wahdat.

Gen. Dostum, together with the Hezb-i-Wahdat and the ousted government of President Burhanuddin Rabbani form the major opposition alliance.

Large columns of tanks, artillery and troops in jeeps were seen by travellers speeding up the valley Saturday in preparation for the assault on Shiite positions.

Further convoys of troops were speeding north from Kabul Sunday, followed by trucks packed with ammunition and carrying bedding for the frontline's fresh arrivals, journalists witnessed.

"For the last few weeks we have not moved from our current positions, but come back again tomorrow (Sunday) and you will see how far we get," another Taliban militia commander said.

Other senior Taliban fighters travelling through here on their way to the frontlines also reported no

fighting in recent days, but promised future gains by the militia in the coming days after an "imminent assault."

A group of Taliban fighters at the mouth of the valley had claimed the recent capture of four key districts close to the frontline, but the higher-level military sources reported only an expected movement.

All day Sunday civilian travellers were held at the mouth of the valley, which just off west from Kabul's main north-bound highway, apparently to stem news of the planned assault breaking.

The Taliban — who control Kabul and around two-thirds of Afghanistan — stormed up the Ghorband Valley in January, having failed to make headway up the Salang Pass, which is the major road link to the north.

Their progress in Ghorband, dubbed the "back door" to the north, has been blocked at the snowy Shibar Pass by Hezb-i-Wahdat, who have easily defended the narrow mountain gorge.

Both the Taliban and the opposition alliance have been promising a major offensive at the break of Afghanistan's harsh winter, but so far this year fighting has mainly involved sporadic exchanges of artillery.

The build up is the first sign of possible major fighting that lies ahead this year for Afghanistan, which has so far been gripped by more than 17 years of civil war.

Patagonia toothfish may dominate Antarctic talks

WELLINGTON (R) — Illegal trawling of the Patagonian Toothfish may dominate a two-week Antarctic treaty consultative meeting starting in Christchurch Monday, even though it is not formally on the agenda.

The 43-nation meeting is aiming to set the foundations for tough new environmental protection measures for the Antarctic and surrounding waters.

But the issue of pirate fishing in Antarctic seas of the newly-discovered, valuable toothfish is challenging cooperative principles underlying the Antarctic treaty.

Stuart Prior, head of the Antarctic policy unit at the New Zealand Foreign Affairs and Trade Ministry, said the plunder of toothfish in the Southern Ocean was a blatant challenge to the credibility of the 1982 Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) — a Hobart-based subordinate body of the Antarctic treaty.

It was significant because the treaty was imposing considerable compliance costs on countries, commercial organisations and tourist operators, and if these could be bypassed then cooperative action could break down, he said.

"CCAMLR worked very well while nobody wanted to fish there, but now it might prove to be a Maginot Line, outflanked by flags of convenience," Mr. Prior said.

There was growing evidence that trawlers from treaty nations were reflagging their ships to join the growing plunder in the rich Antarctic waters.

Chairman of the meeting, Colin Keating, told Radio New Zealand that many countries regarded waters around the Antarctic as belonging to no one.

"They regard it as high seas. There is a real need to increase the political pressure and the legal pressure if we can impose it," he said.

Mr. Keating said a focus of the meeting would be to bring some moral pressure to bear ahead of a fisheries convention meeting in Hobart, Tasmania later this year.

Cooperation is seen as more realistic to protect Antarctic waters as vast distances, the inhospitable climate and lack of naval resources made forceful protection almost impossible.

Environmental issues were always going to be high on the agenda of the meeting but a delay by Japan and Russia in formally ratifying the 1991 Madrid protocol — the supplement to the Antarctic treaty setting out environmental protection rules — had held back formation of an environmental protection committee.

Tung popularity dips; Hong Kong business confidence remains high

HONG KONG (R) — Hong Kong's future leader Tung Chee-hwa has suffered a dip in popularity over plans to curb civil rights, but the territory's blue chip companies were taking an upbeat view of life under Chinese rule from July 1.

The latest findings came just 43 days before Hong Kong, a capitalist territory of 6.4 million people, becomes a part of China again, after 156 years as a British colony.

Underlining the impending flag change, a second advance guard of 66 troops from the People's Liberation Army (PLA) arrived Monday to get future garrison facilities ready.

And, bringing Hong Kong and Beijing ever closer, a new direct train service from the territory to the Chinese capital launched its maiden journey.

An opinion poll published by the South China Morning Post newspaper showed a drop of 3.6 per cent in the number of people who said their trust in Mr. Tung had grown since he was chosen by a China-controlled committee as future leader last December.

Some 41.7 per cent of respondents in the survey also said they had "less trust" in Mr. Tung, a former

shipping tycoon.

In a separate poll by Reuters published Monday, Hong Kong blue chip companies were positive about the business outlook after the handover, set for midnight on June 30.

"Hong Kong will remain an attractive place to do business given its excellent infrastructure as well as its low tax rate and its advantageous location close to China," Cathay Pacific wrote in response to the Reuters questionnaire.

Of 11 blue chip companies asked, all said they were positive about Hong Kong's business environment in the next year.

Ten said they were positive about the outlook over five years, while just one company said it was not positive.

Only two respondents said proposals to weaken civil liberties in Hong Kong would hurt their confidence in Hong Kong's future as a business and financial centre.

Last month Mr. Tung unveiled plans to curb protests and ban foreign funding for political groups in Hong Kong after July 1.

Since then, he has softened the package, although the basic principles in the restrictions remain unchanged and are fiercely

opposed by Hong Kong pro-democracy and human rights groups.

Mr. Tung was selected to be Hong Kong's first post-handover leader under close Chinese supervision, to succeed colonial Governor Chris Patten and govern Hong Kong as a special administrative region of China with a high degree of autonomy.

Sino-British treaties on Hong Kong's handover are based on a "one country, two systems" formula that promises to leave Hong Kong's capitalist way of life unchanged for the next 50 years, but many in Hong Kong fear Communist-style repression.

The South China Morning Post survey found that less people believed Mr. Tung would uphold the "one country, two systems" vow.

Some 68.8 per cent indicated they had confidence in the pledge, down from 75.9 per cent in February.

The poll also showed the Democratic Party, vilified by Chinese Communist officials, was still the most popular party in the territory. If people were allowed to vote, the party would get 25.1 per cent, far ahead of the second-placed, pro-China Liberal Party with 10.7 per cent of the vote.

Sri Lankan death toll hits 335, more troops join battle

COLOMBO (AFP) — Sri Lanka Monday poured more soldiers into its biggest offensive against separatist Tamil rebels in the 25-year conflict as the death toll on both sides climbed to 335, officials said.

Hundreds of soldiers joined the battle over the weekend as infantry captured a key town from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and began moving further into rebel-held territory, defence officials said.

"Troops are on the move again after consolidating their gains," a defence official here said adding the former rebel towns of Ommathurai and Nedunkerni in the north of the country were firmly in the hands of the army.

Residents said more than 10 bus loads of soldiers worshipped at a highly venerated Buddhist shrine in the central town of Anuradhapura Sunday before leaving for battle.

Meanwhile, official sources said the death toll among government soldiers in the offensive rose to 85, including a major and three captains. Another 600 troopers were wounded, with 120 of them were listed as serious.

The rebel Voice of Tigers radio gave no casualty figures but the Defence Ministry said Sunday a total of 250 Tiger fighters had been killed while more than 300 rebels were wounded.

For its part, the LTTE gave no tally for its casualties except to say 37 of its men and women were killed in the first four days of fighting.

In a statement issued from its London office, the Tigers said a large number of Tamil civilians were "offering vast donations of blood" to treat wounded Tiger fighters. The rebels also admitted Monday they lost Nedunkerni to advancing government forces but gave no details of the clashes. The Sri Lankan Air Force had played a key role in bombing the town.

Casualties on both sides have been heavy in the latest offensive which began Tuesday with the deployment of some 20,000 government soldiers. It is the biggest ground offensive undertaken by the military, officials said.

The operation code named "Sure Victory" is aimed at capturing a 75-kilometre highway through rebel territory to link the northern peninsula of Jaffna with the rest of the country.

As ferocious battles raged in the north of the country, security has been tightened in the capital Colombo and its suburbs for fear of Tiger reprisal attacks, police said.

They said there were reports of at least five women Tiger suicide bombers infiltrating the capital to stage attacks. More road blocks and check points have been set up in the city to deal with the problem, police said. The LTTE said civilians were being targeted by the air force as well as the navy, which was shelling coastal areas of the north-eastern district of Mullaitivu where the LTTE has its main command and control centre.

The Tigers also accused the military of arresting 45 Tamil civilians following the capture of Nedunkerni. "None have been seen since," the Tigers said.

A London-based front organisation of the LTTE, the Tamil Centre for Human Rights (TCHR), in a letter to newly-elected British Prime Minister Tony Blair urged the banning of weapons sales to Sri Lanka because of the ongoing fighting.

The LTTE is campaigning for a homeland in the north and east of the country.



Residents of a low-income district area in central Jakarta help to extinguish a fire Monday. Hundreds of houses in the area were gutted in the blaze, which residents said was started in a small street-side restaurant (Reuters photo)

Fire ravages Jakarta residential district

JAKARTA (R) — Hundreds of people fled their homes with their possessions after fire broke out Monday in a residential district in the centre of the Indonesian capital Jakarta, witnesses said.

Several houses in the low-income district in the Keret Tengsin area were gutted in the blaze, which was still raging, they said.

Fire engines were hosing down the flames, but with little success, they said.

Fire brigade officials said there was no indication how the fire started but they

added it did not appear to be linked to campaign violence in the city over the weekend. There was no immediate word of any casualties.

A column of black smoke from the blaze could be seen from many parts of the capital.

Hundreds of people from the congested area fled to a local sports field with furniture, valuables and tin boxes, witnesses said. Some were seen driving motorcycles and other vehicles away from the area.

India's Congress Party faces yet another leadership crisis

NEW DELHI (AFP) — India's Congress (I) Party, smarting under corruption scandals and its worst electoral defeat in more than a century, is facing yet another leadership crisis, newspapers said Monday.

They said pressure was mounting on party President Sitaram Kesri to quit in favour of Sonia Gandhi, the enigmatic widow of former Premier Rajiv Gandhi, whose mother Indira and grandfather Jawaharlal Nehru steered the Congress for much of the century.

The demand for the Italian-born Sonia, who announced her formal entry into politics this month, received a boost Sunday with a senior provincial leader resigning after blaming Mr. Kesri for party mismanagement.

Mr. Kesri took over the reins of the party in September after former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao was virtually forced out in disgrace, following his implication in several corruption scandals. Rao has denied all charges.

Santokh Singh Randhawa,

the party head for the northern state of Punjab where the Congress had to relinquish power after being trounced in state elections, this year, asked Sonia Gandhi to intervene and save the party.

"I appeal for a new leadership, under Sonia Gandhi, to protect democratic norms in the Congress," he told the Punjab-based Tribune daily.

Mr. Randhawa alleged that ongoing state-level party elections to pick new leaders in the Punjab were being ignored by the Congress top brass and were not "in accordance with norms and rules."

Mr. Randhawa's attack came as senior Congress leader A.R. Antulay, an aide of Indira Gandhi, accused Mr. Kesri of jeopardising the party's standing for personal gain.

"That he has been aspiring to become prime minister is a well-known fact," he said, recalling Mr. Kesri's sudden withdrawal of support for the fragile ruling coalition on March 30.

The move sparked political turmoil and dented the

Congress' image. It was finally resolved on April 21 after the Congress' backtracked from its claim to power and backed a new prime minister from the 13-party alliance.

"His ambition has failed. Certain decisions that he took ended in a fiasco. He should quit. He must face the gallows... the political gallows," Mr. Antulay told the Hindustan Times newspaper in an interview.

The Congress has said Sonia Gandhi's entry into active politics would "enthuse, galvanise and electrify" the party.

Mrs. Gandhi had repeatedly refused to be drawn into the party since her husband, prime minister from 1984 to 1989, was killed on May 21, 1991 by a suicide bomber while campaigning in southern India.

She distanced herself from the Congress when it suffered a string of electoral defeats in provincial balloting under Mr. Rao in 1994 and its worst drubbing in 112 years in last year's general elections.

U.S. aviator lands after flying over area of Earhart disappearance

WASHINGTON (AFP) — U.S. pilot Linda Finch landed on the tiny island of Kanton Monday after flying over the area where aviation pioneer Amelia Earhart disappeared almost 60 years ago, flight organisers reported.

Ms. Finch landed at Kanton, an island about 11 kilometres long slightly after 0300 GMT, flight organisers said.

"She is probably doing very mundane things like purifying water and resting," said Jane Anderson, a spokeswoman for the event organisers in San Francisco, California.

Ms. Finch is flying in a restored version of the twin-engine 1935 Lockheed Electra 10-E in which Earhart made her ill-fated attempt to circumnavigate the Earth.

Some 50 people live on the tiny island, Ms. Anderson said.

A barge had earlier shipped fuel and oil from Melbourne and stored it at

the airport awaiting Ms. Finch's arrival.

A few hours earlier Ms. Finch dropped three memorials near the U.S. territory of Howland Island, the place where Earhart, also an American, and navigator Fred Noonan disappeared without trace on July 2, 1937.

Howland Island is a tiny uninhabited island about 2,000 kilometres north of Fiji, in the South Pacific.

"The wreath is my way of saying 'thank you' to Amelia Earhart for all she has taught so many people," Ms. Finch wrote in her flight log, which can be read on the Internet.

The millionaire Texas businesswoman is the first person to try to recreate Earhart's original flight.

Ms. Finch's plane however is equipped with a high-tech satellite hookup that allows her to send and receive electronic mail and faxes via her on-board computer, and receive the latest weather information.

In the 1970s Kanton was a major but very secret U.S. anti-ballistic missile tracking station. The U.S. has since abandoned the base.

On Tuesday Ms. Finch is expected to fly on to Kiribati, 1,700 kilometres, northeast of Kanton.

A large welcome ceremony is expected for her there.

Ms. Finch then flies on to Hawaii. She is scheduled to land in Oakland, California, on May 28 to complete the flight of almost 40,000 kilometres.

Before landing in Kanton Ms. Finch wrote in her log: "I spent the afternoon shopping for food, water, sheets and stuff to cook with when we get to Kanton. In the last few days we have continued to get faxes telling us how primitive it is there. There is no food or fresh water. Everything has to be imported and the people there have very little."

Zaire rebels take control of Kinshasa; 200 dead

KINSHASA (R) — Laurent Kabila's rebels, feted by a grateful populace, extended their hold over the Zairean capital Kinshasa and Red Cross workers clearing corpses from the streets issued a provisional death toll of 200.

Togo's state television reported Sunday that a rebel attack forced ousted President Mobutu Sese Seko to flee his lavish jungle palace at his ancestral home at Gbadolite in northern Zaire. It said he stopped over in Togo.

South Africa recognised Mr. Kabila as head of State of the Democratic Republic of Congo, his new name for Zaire, and expressed satisfaction with his first steps as national leader.

"There will be formed a broad-based transitional authority," South African Deputy President Thabo Mbeki said after talks with Mr. Kabila at rebel headquarters in the southern city of Lubumbashi.

"I think the process is very much on course and we are satisfied with what's happening," he added.

South African President

Nelson Mandela was a key figure in efforts to broker a peaceful end to Zaire's seven-month civil war and promote a smooth transition to democracy.

A string of Western nations have called for a broad-based government as a bridge to elections.

Mr. Mbeki was the first foreign dignitary to meet Mr. Kabila, one day after he proclaimed himself head of state, promised a government by Tuesday and said a Constituent Assembly would be set up to work out a transitional constitution.

"We support the positions that were enunciated in the communiqué issued yesterday and one of the elements in that was that President Kabila takes over immediately as head of state," Mr. Mbeki said.

Mr. Kabila's forces, who took up arms in October in a dispute over Zairean nationality for ethnic Tutsis, seized control over Kinshasa's government and diplomatic districts Sunday, after a night of sporadic shooting in areas not then under their command.

Witnesses said they saw

the summary execution of an officer from Mr. Mobutu's feared Presidential Guard. They also saw mobs administering rough justice against soldiers caught looting.

The local Red Cross said in a statement that at least 200 people had been killed — die-hard Mobutu loyalists who resisted or soldiers or civilians caught looting or shot in crossfire.

The rebels had given members of Mr. Mobutu's armed forces until Sunday to surrender and hand over their arms. Many did. Some apologised on national television for causing trouble.

Mr. Kabila, 56, sent a delegation to Kinshasa from Lubumbashi ahead of the formation of a new government.

"I am going to contact all my compatriots without exception. There are parties, civil organisations, everyone," said Deogratius Bugeira, secretary-general of Kabila's Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo (AFDL).

Mr. Bugeira would not say when Mr. Kabila would visit Kinshasa.

Supporters of Mr. Mobutu's veteran political opponent Etienne Tshisekedi, moved out of their Kinshasa homes, fearing Mobutu loyalists would try to kill them, Tshisekedi aides said.

As for Mr. Mobutu, who ruled for over three decades and fled Kinshasa Friday, Togo's television said he made a technical stop in its capital Lome on his way to another destination, most likely Morocco.

Officials in Morocco have been expecting him since Saturday, the day the rebels marched into Zaire's capital virtually unopposed and claimed victory.

Iran Monday recognised the new regime of Mr. Kabila, the official IRNA news agency reported Monday.

"We hope the new regime can restore stability and security in order to achieve the legitimate demands of the people," said Foreign Ministry spokesman Mohammad Mohammadi.

Mr. Mohammadi said Iran "welcomes the end of the civil war and a restoration of peace in Congo."

Cannes fights censorship with Palm Awards

CANNES, France (R) — The 50th Cannes festival gave two of its top awards Sunday to Iranian director Abbas Kiarostami and Egyptian filmmaker Youssef Chahine in a strong show of support for their battles against censorship.

The jury presided over by French actress Isabelle Adjani surprised critics with a Golden Palm award to both Kiarostami, whose film *The Taste Of The Cherry* almost missed the competition after Tehran authorities initially banned him from coming, and to Japan's Shohei Imamura for *The Eel*.

"It's unbelievable. It's a great pleasure for me to be here with you for this 50th anniversary," said Kiarostami, who earlier in the festival was given a standing ovation.

Adjani, who at the start of the festival had taken a stand for cinema freedom, announced at a star-studded ceremony a special 50th anniversary prize for Egyptian director Youssef Chahine, whose earlier movie *The Migrant* was banned after protests from Muslim fundamentalists.

Censorship overshadowed celebrations at the festival with China banning both Zhang Yimou and Zhang Yuan from showing films in Cannes this year.

Kiarostami's film is a meditation on suicide and the Muslim religion, while Imamura's is a quirky and often hilarious tale of a former prisoner, obsessed by his pet eel, who rebuilds his life from scratch.



Egyptian director Youssef Chahine raises both hands to acknowledge applause from the public at the closing ceremony at the 50th Cannes Film Festival. Chahine received the Prix of the 50th Cannes International Film Festival for his career as a director (Reuters photo)

The veteran Chahine was in competition with destiny, an ode to tolerance focusing on the life of a mediaeval philosopher, but Adjani made clear that his award was for his life's work.

Egyptian-born and Canadian-raised Atom Egoyan won the Grand Jury Prize, widely seen as the runner-up to the Golden Palm, for *The Sweet Hereafter*, a gripping account of a small British Columbia town coping with a school bus accident.

dent.

Sean Penn and Kathy Burke won the best actor and best actress prizes respectively for Nick Cassavetes' *She's So Lovely* and Gary Oldman's first movie *Nil By Mouth* on London's East Enders.

A few whistles greeted French actress Emmanuelle Beart, who campaigned earlier this year for African immigrants demanding residence papers, when she reaffirmed her support for them.

"I'm sorry, I want these people to be understood and heard," Beart insisted to cheers and clapping which quickly drowned out the whistles.

Critics' polls by trade magazines had failed to pick a clear favourite for the Golden Palm, with Ang Lee's *The Ice Storm* on a New York suburban family and Curtis Hanson's fast-paced thriller *La Confidential* in a narrow lead.

In fact only Lee picked up a best script prize for its author James Schamus.

To the relief of festivalgoers, Clint Eastwood's closing film *Absolute Power*, shown out of competition, produced the goods so many entries had failed to come up with — a pacy and credible story, reliable acting and comic moments.

Typically of Eastwood, it pits an individual with moral standards, in this case a thief, against evil in the form of the president of the United States desperate to cover up his involvement in a mistress's murder.

Magistrate, two others killed in Pakistani town

KARACHI (AFP) — A magistrate and two other people were killed as shooting erupted in a remote Pakistani rural town during religious rituals of Shiite Muslims, residents and police said Monday.

Eleven people were also injured in the incident Sunday which occurred in the Sind province town of Gambut, located some 500 kilometres northwest of here, police said.

The magistrate, identified as Zaigham Abbas Shah, a Shiite Muslim, was fatally hit by bullets and two people were injured when unidentified assailants opened fire on hundreds of Shiites marching in a procession, police said.

The shooting enraged the crowd which attacked a nearby bus and fired on the passengers, killing two and injuring eight, they said.

No arrests were reported

by the police which said an investigation was under way.

The minority Shiite community staged marches in cities and towns across Pakistan Sunday as part of annual commemoration of the 7th century martyrdom in Iraq of Imam Hussain, grandson of the Prophet Muhammad.

The ceremonies were held under stringent security by army troops and police, with a day-long curfew in

three sensitive cities in central Punjab province, which has been in the grip of tension between sectarian groups.

Police said the extraordinary security was imposed after around 100 killings in Punjab in recent months in shootings and attacks blamed on extremist groups from Sunni and Shiite Muslims.

Sunnis form an overwhelming majority of Pakistan's 130 million people.

Pakistan seeks to cement relations with U.S.

ISLAMABAD (R) — Pakistan's Foreign Minister Gohar Ayub Khan, making his first visit to Washington since Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's government took power in February, said he wanted to cement relations with the United States.

"The objective is to bring about better understanding of the Nawaz Sharif government, the Pakistan government, with the United States," Mr. Khan said before leaving Sunday for his three-day visit to the U.S.

"We always have very good relations... We want to further cement our relations and improve those relations so that we can play a more effective role — both Pakistan and the United States — in the region we are in," he told state television.

Mr. Khan said his talks with U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Secretary of Defence William Cohen and National Security Adviser Samuel Berger would cover Pakistan's dispute with India over Kashmir, the narcotics trade and the fate of F-16 aircraft Pakistan has paid for but not received.

Mr. Khan will also meet U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan.

Mr. Khan made clear that Pakistan had not given up hope of getting the F-16s, whose delivery was blocked in 1990 because of suspicions about Islamabad's nuclear programme.

He listed four ways to resolve the issue of the planes, for which Pakistan paid \$658 million. The United States could deliver the aircraft, refund the money or sell the planes to a third country and then reimburse Pakistan. The fourth option, he said, was legal action in U.S. courts.

Mr. Khan said he favoured the first option, although Congress would have to vote down legislation, known as the Pressler A. amendment, which was used to cut off military aid to Pakistan.

The Clinton administration persuaded Congress to ease the sanctions in 1996 when Benazir Bhutto was prime minister, but the F-16s remained blocked. Efforts to sell them to a third country, such as Indonesia, have not succeeded.

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Threatening bias

THERE IS a difference between the U.S. government incarceration of Japanese-Americans during the World War II and the killing of Palestinians allegedly involved in selling land to Israelis. Taking the issue a bit further, there are also differences between the Israeli methods and those the Irish Republican Army (IRA) employs in its fight against British rule in Northern Ireland. One difference is that the Palestinians have to contend and respond to America's sharp scrutiny of their actions while the U.S. turns a blind eye to the support, moral and fiscal, that the IRA enjoys in the U.S.

Of course, it is not a new phenomenon that the powerful should ambush the meek and powerless, especially if the latter is not of its own blood, race, religion or creed. We are not saying that the Americans are biased against the Palestinians in the latter's protracted struggle to gain their independence on part of the land that only a hundred years ago was almost exclusively theirs. That is until the powerful and rich Jewish Agency started buying land from poor Palestinian farmers. The Palestinians say the Americans are biased. The Europeans concur. And many Arab and other nations are also saying it. The Palestinians then, as now, had no government to defend their rights or to put an end to the sale of land to Jews. It was the British who controlled Palestine at the time. As far as the Palestinians are concerned, the situation changed very little. It is not the British but the Israelis who now maintain control over Palestine and who enjoy the freedom to destroy homes, buy land, confiscate it and give it to fundamentalists to build settlements. Rich Jews from all over the world want to be free to be able to purchase land from the Palestinians without anyone making any sort of protest. Land bought in this manner is then slated for Jewish settlements. Palestinians, meanwhile, want to resist this "legal" transfer of their limited land resources to the Israelis. What do they do? They cannot raise equivalent funds to those affluent Jews can raise. So what do they do? They resort to a crude method, historically used in Europe during the Nazi occupation, killing those who collaborate. This, of course, is a savage act that no civilised person can or should condone.

But what about the Palestinians who have very little control over only a very small parcel of their land? Shouldn't the Americans, the sponsors of the peace process, then intervene on behalf of both sides of the conflict demanding that the Palestinians stop this retributive killing and the Jews stop buying occupied land? The current stand-off over Jabal Abu Ghneim which threatens the whole process concerns a case of Palestinian land sold to Israelis. Or are the Americans, as Palestinian President Yasser Arafat recently charged, totally biased in favour of Israel?

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for Al Dustour Monday strongly attacked the new Press and Publications Law, describing it as a step that takes Jordan backwards and against democracy in the country. Jihad Momani said that the new law, which imposes harsh restrictions on the work of journalists and whose provisions are designed to ruin the journalism profession in the Kingdom is a measure that clearly reflects the martial law ideology. The new law is a political tool directed against the Jordanian press which is openly against normalisation with the Jewish state and which rejects Israel's actions and aggression and its barbaric treatment of the Palestinian people, said the writer. He said that the Jordanian press has the right to exercise its national role, which is not that of backing the government's actions all the time, and hence proves the presence of democracy in the Kingdom, he noted. The writer said that the harsh law is totally rejected by the Jordanian journalists and public as it is an ugly reminder of the days of the martial law and is considered as a backward step with serious consequences to the forward march of democracy.

A WRITER for Al Ra'i daily attacked Turkey's repeated acts of aggression on Iraqi territory, conducted under the pretext of fighting the Kurdish rebels who launch attacks on Turkish military positions. Mahmoud Rimawi said that the problem lies not with the Iraqi Kurds but rather with the Kurds inside Turkey itself, who have been rebelling against Ankara, seeking independence. The writer said that by launching attacks on Iraqi Kurdistan, Ankara is trying to shift the attention of the world public opinion from its mistreatment of the Kurds on its own territory and focus it on Kurds who, it says, launch attacks from across the border. The writer said that Ankara has disregarded calls by the U.N. secretary general, the European Union and the major powers to withdraw its forces from Iraq and its operations in the past few days have resulted in the death of 900 people, most of whom Kurds who the Western coalition claims to be protecting from the Baghdad regime. The writer said that the only solution to the problem is returning Iraqi Kurdistan to Baghdad's sovereignty and strengthening the Iraqi-Turkish border against any infiltrations so as not to give Ankara an excuse for launching further acts of aggression on Iraqi lands.

The View from Fourth Circle

Provincial women, capital and big doses of humility pills

By Rami G. Khouri

THE COMBINATION of political liberalisation, high education levels and activism by non-governmental organisations has made Jordan an important Arab/Islamic country to watch for signs about the status of Middle Eastern women and their participation in public life.

Three issues that are important in their own right and also globally chic: gender rights, democratisation and sustainable development, have converged to make training and activism for women's political participation something of a growth industry in Jordan and many other developing countries.

Efforts in this field focus heavily on lectures, training workshops and other such meetings at which women learn about issues that interest and concern them, such as legal issues and their religious, cultural and civil roots, running a political campaign, operating a business or coping with the pressures of being divorced or widowed. (It is interesting to observe how ideological patterns and interests in this sector replicate almost perfectly the prevailing male-dominated political culture of the country, including activism by royally-guided NGOs, Islamist groups, centrist-business-dominated groups, locally-based and predominantly tribal groups and leftist-nationalist-oriented women's groups — but that's another subject for another time.)

I have had the opportunity in the last year to follow the efforts of one independent Jordanian institution that has run three-day training workshops for women in several provincial towns, including Aqaba, Irbid and Mafrq. At these gatherings the local women themselves — through a democratic and participatory consultation — came up with rich priority lists of the issues that really matter to them and their families. (I suspect that the priority issues lists are broadly representative of the whole country, given that so many of the same issues were listed in all three cities, but more statistically representative methods are required to verify or refute this assumption.)

In rough order of priority, I would list the following key issues that dominate the priority concerns of the women who participated in these workshops: a) better health care for women and children, b) better medical insurance and financial support services for women, especially women who are divorced, widowed, poor or disabled, c) providing soft loans for women who want to run commercial businesses, d) changing the nationality law so that women married to non-Jordanians can pass on Jordanian nationality to their children or husbands and secure permanent resident status for them, and, e) changing laws and regulations and enhancing education systems in order to give women equal opportunity to participate in public life, whether in parlia-

ment, local government or the civil service. Other important issues mentioned by many women include the problem of honour killings, teaching women and girls about their legal rights, genetic testing to reduce the risks of disability among children born of marriages between cousins and improving water quality.

Several things quickly emerge from these meetings and from the extraordinarily rich discussions among the women. The first is the obvious vulnerability that many women feel in a society in which divorced women and other women with family responsibilities often find that their traditional tribal- or family-based support system often cannot meet the cash-based demands of the modern economy's health and food provision systems. Women most directly feel the vulnerabilities of falling into those large gaps between tradition and modernity, between the past and the future — the gaps between the state's social security system, family-based support networks, and privately-funded insurance schemes.

The second important observation is the rights-based nature of many of the demands and needs the women identified. Jordanian women increasingly feel the practical, material and emotional constraints of, for example, not being allowed to pass on their Jordanian nationality to their children in some cases, or of not having reasonable access to commercial credits on their own. The important political and psychological transformation taking place — so evident here — is that more and more women see these problems as denials of their fundamental human rights and denials of their Jordanian citizenship rights, rather than as disparity issues that can be resolved through traditional charity-based approaches.

A third important point that emerges from this political exercise is the practical and indigenous nature of the needs that the women identify over and over again. Being a democratic, participatory and egalitarian process, this kind of need self-identification naturally results in an accurate reflection of the real problems that women face — rather than echoes of feminism, nationalist ideologies, political moralities or other sermons that are routinely preached in the capital or in foreign countries. It is interesting that Israel, Iraq, Palestine, America and other such problematics are not high on people's lists of priority issues to address.

The fourth noteworthy aspect of these meetings is the incredibly productive and satisfying nature of the democratic consultations that take place. Offered a chance to participate in a democratic non-condescending and serious dynamic designed to elicit facts, identify needs and priorities, and chart broad strategic goals, the provincial women

of Jordan perform with distinction, time after time, in town after town.

The fifth interesting issue that emerges from this process is the obvious and rather large gap between the issues that women identify as important to them at the local level and the issues that are addressed, say, by the government, the parliament or the mass media nationwide in Jordan. There is some overlap between local needs and national political expression, but not enough, I would suggest. It seems obvious, yet again, that the most significant consequences of Jordan's political liberalisation and democratisation are occurring at the local level, mostly among non-governmental organisations, and mostly in fields led by women. Our political system and its chief operatives at national ministerial and parliamentary level need to swallow large doses of humility pills and listen more carefully to the wealth of information and sentiment that are coming out of local meetings by concerned and activist women throughout the country. If our politicians want to gain more credibility, perhaps they should listen more closely to our local ladies.

We are fortunate that our men and women take advantage of the opportunity to hold such meetings and workshops, and honestly express their rights and needs. Yet, the honest verbalisation of needs is not in itself the sole aim of such a consultative process; the ultimate aim is to feed this information into the political decision-making system and to bring about responsive changes in government policies, spending patterns and operational efficiencies. When women at the grassroots level repeatedly and almost unanimously express themselves in terms of unfulfilled rights as well as unmet basic needs, the exercise at hand shifts from the realm of women's issues to the realm of national political issues.

We should respond vigorously to these early warning signs of internal disparity, concern, and even some personal resentment — for in the Holy Land, as in Chicago, in the end all politics is local. For Jordan and most other Middle Eastern and developing countries, the voices of local women are perhaps the best available indicator of real needs and thus they should be the best lodestars and road markers for future government strategies. National responses to the issues that such women are articulating at the local level will ultimately determine the integrity and stability of society, the viability of the state, the quality of its governance and political systems, and the well-being of its people. We no longer have the excuse of saying we did not know what the people of our countries feel, want, need, or fear. Now we know very well, if we make the effort to listen.

In the Mideast, the internecine wars are the ones that matter

By Thomas L. Friedman

WASHINGTON — On Israel's Independence Day the army chief of staff, Amnon Shahak, was asked by the Yedioth Ahronoth newspaper whether he was more worried about the eroding status of the Israeli army in the eyes of the Israeli public or by Syria's steady build-up of missiles and chemical weapons.

General Shahak answered: "Neither."

"What really troubles me," he said, "is the dissension within Israeli society, which in recent weeks has gained dangerous momentum. I have no doubt that this weakens us a lot. I am referring to the differences between Zionists and non-Zionists, between religious and secular, between Sephardim and

Ashkenazim, between left and right. We cannot allow ourselves to let these arguments penetrate into the minds of our youth and affect their motivation."

General Shahak's remarks remind us that the really important wars today are not involving Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Algeria, Palestine, Turkey and Morocco are the wars inside these countries, not among them. When the Arabs and Israelis were at war, the issue was whether Israel would coexist with the Arabs. On this the Arabs were united against, the Israelis united in favour. But the Arab-Israeli war is over now. The issue today is how Israel coexists with the Arabs — in an unhappy ceasefire or with real peace and normalisation? On this question both Israeli and Arab societies are deeply divided.

In the Arab World, the

internal struggle pits on one side those who want to open their societies and link up with the global economy. They view peace with Israel not as a good thing in and of itself, but as a necessary ritual if they want to really attract foreign investment and U.S. assistance to modernise their countries. Against them are arrayed those forces in the Arab World that view modernisation as a threat — from bureaucrats who fear they will lose their power to private businessmen, to fundamentalists and intellectuals who fear they will lose their identity to the mixmaster of modernisation-Americanisation.

This group views peace with Israel as simply the most odious element of modernisation.

In Israel there is a similar internal war, in which peace

with the Arabs is bound up with how Israel will relate to the world generally. It has grown so sharp that the Israeli philosopher David Hartman now warns about the "new partition of Israel" — between an ultra-Orthodox Israel with its capital in Jerusalem and a secular Israel with its capital in Tel Aviv.

The same ultra-Orthodox forces in Israel that oppose the peace process because they see it as another form of assimilation that will only bring Israel more Pizza Huts, Blockbuster Videos and smut-ridden cable channels are the same ultra-Orthodox who want to pass a law delegitimising Conservative and Reform Judaism. For the ultra-Orthodox, Pizza Hut, the peace process and Reform Judaism are all the same thing — vehicles that pro-

more assimilation and a loss of Jewish identity.

Tragically, too few U.S. Jews understand this. They think the battle for Jerusalem is with the Arabs. That war is over. Jerusalem will be controlled by the Jews. The real issue is whether Jerusalem will be controlled by Jews who see it as a city of tolerance and pluralism, where every stream of Judaism is treated as legitimate, or whether Jerusalem will be controlled by Jews who want it to be a ghetto that says no to the modern world — the sister city of Tehran.

"The issue in Jerusalem is not simply whether the Arabs are being excluded, it is whether the Jews are being included — whether Israel is building a Jerusalem where all Jews will feel welcome and legitimate," observes the Middle

East scholar Stephen P. Cohen.

While American Jews are out buying newspaper ads defending Israel's right to build housing in any Arab district of Jerusalem, they have failed to notice that an increasing number of Israelis don't feel Jerusalem is their spiritual capital anymore. It may be where the government sits, but it is not a place they feel comfortable living in or visiting because of the increasing domination of ultra-Orthodox over the city's life. That's why General Shahak is right. The decisive wars are inside now. Who wins the Jewish-Israeli battle for Jerusalem, and who wins the Arab-Arab battle over modernisation, will determine how the Arab-Israeli conflict ends.

The New York Times

A European voice in the debate over humanitarian aid

By Emma Bonino

BRUSSELS — The dilemmas facing those of us rethinking the issue of humanitarian aid look different depending on the side of the Atlantic we are on.

Allow me to contribute a European point of view to the healthy, much-needed debate launched by J. Brian Atwood and Leonard Rogers of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

They write that the world will not reply to crises in peripheral states without U.S. leadership. Really? I do not believe Europe's humanitarian response to recent crises was delayed in anticipation of a lead from Washington.

But if by "reply" the authors mean "seek solutions," that is a different ball game, to use an American expression. It is a game I do not believe humanitarian actors should be playing.

Today, conflict rages in Eastern Zaire and elsewhere in the Great Lakes region of Africa. North Korea is starving, and the fate of Afghanistan as a nation-state grows increasingly uncertain. These are but some of the issues on our agenda.

Should we feed Rwandan refugees now deep in Zaire who took part in genocide in their country — or should we view their current predicament as rough jus-

tice for their horrible crimes? Is it wise for us to relieve North Korea's government of responsibility for feeding its own people, even though that may enable Pyongyang to concentrate on military spending? Is it right to help the people of Kabul, disregarding the Taliban's record of gross violations of human rights, especially women's rights? Should the Italian government open the gates to all those fleeing unrest in Albania, despite hard evidence that the exodus of asylum-seekers is being managed by organised crime?

These questions reflect the growing complexity of issues that are testing the humanitarian community. Such issues are understandably confusing to the public. Doubts and uncertainties are beginning to erode support for humanitarian aid, which is why I wholeheartedly welcome a debate.

Yes, the world has changed — though not for the better. Yes, I agree the international community looks set to face a proliferation of micro-conflicts at regional and subregional levels. The root causes of such crises may be ethnic, religious, political, tribal. Unlike cold war era crises, these tend to develop unchecked unless and until they become a threat to global security or to major economic interests, or until

they sufficiently rouse the public's conscience.

And yes, I agree the United States is the sole remaining superpower, and the only nation with truly global reach — though I find this frustrating. What I regret, as a federalist European, is the fact that European capitals seem to be resigned to life as a mere bunch of lesser military allies, and that the European Union is too hesitant about asserting itself as a partner on a par with the United States in the political and economic spheres.

change depending on the government of the day.

Africa, traditionally peripheral in U.S. foreign policy, is an excellent example of a pattern of moving goalsposts. The United States used to be motivated by the containment of socialist ideology on the continent. This warranted backing the Mobutus and Savimbis, as well as keeping a cool distance from the socialist-inclined African National Congress of Nelson Mandela. President Ronald Reagan, we may recall, vetoed sanctions leg-

leaders represents a positive change in a political landscape that is sometimes disheartening.

However, there are some things about them that are making me lose sleep. Many in this group of very articulate, reformist leaders — soon to be joined by Laurent Kabila — are allergic to multiparty democracy (with the exception of the Ethiopians). They seem to think respect for human rights is optional, and they resort to warfare with disturbing ease.

Africa illustrates my two

of the prevailing analysis of the international community at large.

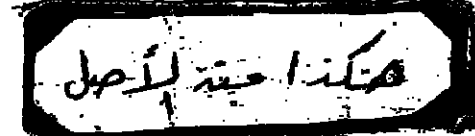
This is why I do not think it is appropriate to focus the argument on prescriptive guidelines for U.S. humanitarian intervention. Humanitarian aid should never be devised as a part of any country's foreign policy. I would certainly oppose the idea if European Union governments or institutions were to suggest it.

I agree that someone needs to find solutions for the fundamental causes of complex emergencies. But this should be the job of other actors, not those directly involved in humanitarian aid. Humanitarian aid is about people, not governments.

As for us, we must make sure relief reaches the hungry child whose only sin was to have been born in Sudan, in Cuba or in a refugee camp in Zaire. We must work hard to preserve what is left of the impartiality innate in the concept of humanitarian aid.

We must keep such aid available as a last resort for all human beings in need, wherever they are, whatever passport they hold.

The writer is European commissioner for humanitarian affairs. The article above is reprinted from the International Herald Tribune.



Israel warns Lebanese army

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli military officials accused the Lebanese army Monday of firing missiles at Israeli helicopters over South Lebanon and warned that such actions in future would draw retaliation.

In remarks carried by the Israeli press Monday, Israel's northern force commander, General Amiram Levine, said Lebanese forces fired at helicopters trying to evacuate Israeli soldiers killed and wounded in an ambush Thursday by guerrillas inside Lebanon.

"The terrorists fired shells

and the Lebanese army fired missiles," Gen. Levine said in reference to the attack, which left three Israeli soldiers dead and seven wounded.

"Whoever will try to attack the army will be hit, including the Lebanese army," he said.

In a separate interview, Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai said that while Israel does not consider Lebanon an enemy, "as soon as the Lebanese army opens fire, it is defined specifically at that point as an enemy."

He said Israeli air raids

against suspected positions of the Iranian-backed Hizbollah militia in retaliation for Thursday's ambush were not a sign of an escalation along the border.

"We don't have any interest in escalating the situation but we will keep fulfilling all our duties to keep security in the north," Mr. Mordechai said.

Thursday's attack took place just north of an Israeli-occupied buffer zone established in South Lebanon in the 1980s to counter cross-border attacks by Palestinian and Hizbollah guerrillas.

All 12 presidents of professional associations will resign

(Continued from page 1)

"Including members of Parliament and anyone else who may be affected by this law."

The press corps reacted rapidly Sunday after the announcement of the new law late Saturday evening.

The JPA's ten-member council, with the exception of President Seif Sherif, submitted their resignations. Mr. Sherif will submit his on Saturday along with other professional association presidents.

Additionally, chief editors of the weekly tabloid press hosted a press conference, urging the Parliament to convene an extraordinary session and stating their willingness to take the issue before the Higher Court of Justice.

In statements to the press, opposition deputies at the Lower House, including the 16-strong Islamic Action Front, condemned the government's action and demanded an extraordinary parliamentary session.

Such a session requires an

absolute majority of the 80-member Parliament. Opposition members do not have a majority in the house, so such a move would require agreement between the House's centrist deputies and 23 opposition deputies.

Centrist deputies have not yet issued a statement. However, Hakam Kheir, spokesperson for the National Constitutional Party, the country's largest centrist party, said that party members would be meeting today to discuss the issue.

Randa Habib's corner

Passing away softly

SHE WAS so old that people forgot all about her. And it is only when she died that they realised that until the day before she had been alive.

As for her, she had got used to be on her own, away from the world, surrounded by the memories of the time when she was full of life, of love, of hopes and dreams.

She was living so much in the past, that the present did not exist anymore.

A picture, a scent, a vision... were enough. She could relive the reality of her past.

Sitting in her rocking chair, she would travel miles away to sandy beaches. She could feel the breeze on her face, the refreshing sea on her body. She could touch people she loved, gone now for long.

With her eyes closed, she could see it all so clearly. And she could comprehend it better, with the wisdom she acquired with time and age.

She had no regrets, for she lived her life to the full. And she was at peace with herself, with the conviction that she had never harmed anyone.

Sometimes, however, the memories of her past life would not be quite enough to warm up her cold, lonely nights.

She would shed a tear, then wipe it off quickly with a sense of shame. Tears were not for her, but for those with a future who could allow themselves to feel the pain.

There was no time for her to feel self-pity. When she was young and strong, she was a rock for others who could always lean on her. Now she had to be a rock to herself, lonely in a world that forgot her.

That same day, she felt particularly tired and weak. So, she closed her eyes and crossed her hands, ready for the journey to the other world.

I dedicate this corner to her memory.

Crown Prince discusses EU's role

(Continued from page 1)

efforts to boost cooperation with the EU in all fields and follows the recent signing of the Jordan-EU Association Agreement which will come into effect as of January 1999.

In a working dinner with Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi, scheduled for late Monday, the Crown Prince was expected to discuss bilateral as well as Jordan-EU relations, with a particular emphasis on the possible European role in reactivating the peace process, stalled since the elections of the Likud-led government of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

At the bilateral level, discussion between the Crown Prince and Mr. Prodi is supposed to explore possibilities for a debt-swap.

According to Deputy Prime Minister Jawad Anani, who together with Foreign minis-

ter Fayez Tarawneh is accompanying the Crown Prince in his European trip, the volume of trade between Jordan and Italy amounts to \$300 million, with Jordanian exports totalling \$45 million and imports nearing \$260 million.

Jordan's debt to Italy is \$115 million, accounting for 8 per cent of the Kingdom's total foreign debts. One of the objectives of the Crown Prince's visit is the conversion of such debt to equities or project financing schemes.

Initiated during the Euro-Med partnership conference held in Malta on March 16th, the association agreement represents the culmination of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership launched in Barcelona in 1995 and providing a comprehensive framework for cooperation between the Middle East and Europe.

Before the Crown Prince's

speech, Director of the Institute of Diplomacy Mazen Armouti and Director of the Italian Military Centre for Strategic Studies, (CEMIS) Giuseppe Cucchi signed two cooperation memoranda.

These two agreements will cover the spectrum of possible relationships between the Institute of diplomacy, the CASD and the CEMIS," Dr. Armouti said, "including the exchange of researchers, lecturers, and databases." With the signing of the memorandum, Jordan entered a UNESCO-sponsored scheme gathering think-tanks, international organisations and institutions entitled "Culture of Peace."

A third agreement between the Institute of Diplomacy and the Strategic Centre of the University of Florence is in the making during the Crown Prince's two-day visit to Italy. Dr. Armouti also disclosed.

U.S. ambassador says Israeli...

(Continued from page 1)

Ms. Berger said in a television interview.

"The point here is not dramatic moments, the point here is progress in the peace process. And the parties themselves have to be prepared to make the kinds of compromises, the kinds of commitments that would

make a dramatic moment not only dramatic, but successful," he said.

Israeli press reports Monday said Ms. Berger told visiting Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy on Friday that Washington will only intensify its mediation effort if Israel is ready to take some "difficult decisions."

This was interpreted as a

renewal of U.S. demands that Mr. Netanyahu agree to freeze all Jewish settlement building in Arab areas pending negotiations on a final peace settlement with the Palestinians.

Mr. Netanyahu, whose fractious coalition government relies on the support of hard-line pro-settlement groups, has ruled out any such freeze.

Israeli prison guards attack 300

(Continued from page 1)

not be reached for comment.

Megiddo Prison was the site of a similar riot last March after protests against administrative detention policies and prison condi-

tions. Detainees, some of whom have been in Megiddo for over a year without trial, are housed in tents in the prison yard. The prison also holds over 600 other Palestinians who have been charged or tried.

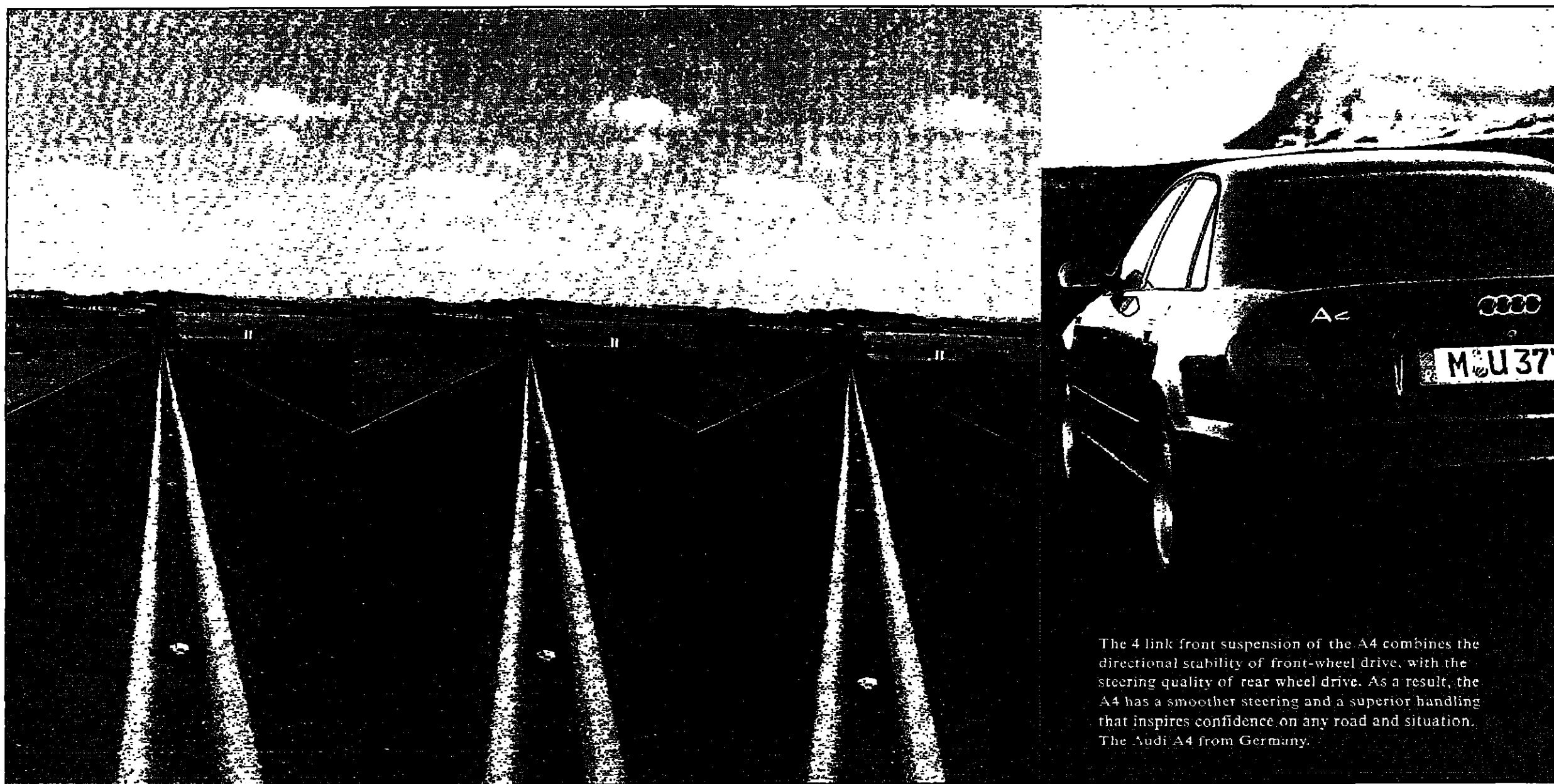
Israel committed to

release Palestinian prisoners under self-rule agreements with the Palestinians. Thirty women prisoners were freed in February but release of over 3,000 male prisoners is tied up in negotiations.

Jordan Times

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'Parallel market' approach fails as farmers show no interest in direct selling to consumers

By Samir Ghawi

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Despite informing and urging farmers to come forward and sell their agricultural products directly to the consumers and retailers, efforts in this direction produced no results.

According to Mustafa Abu Osba, the director of the Vegetables and Fruits Central Market, ever since April 17 when farmers were told that they could come to the market and sell directly to the consumers and retailers in what is described as a "parallel market," none have opted to do so.

Such a market was meant to shorten the marketing ring and increase the

income of farmers while lowering prices for the consumer.

"The farmers are not interested in coming here and selling directly. They load vehicles with produce at the farm and entrust drivers to deliver the vegetables and fruits to the wholesalers," Mr. Abu Osba told the Jordan Times Monday.

He indicated that farmers prefer to tend to their crops rather than come all the way to the market to deal directly with the consumers.

"Such a method has been tried before, and our experience with this approach is that it will not work," the director of the market

emphasised.

Asked what the next step would be, Mr. Abu Osba pointed out that after the officials at the Ministry of Supply became convinced that the "parallel market" approach was not functioning, the intention is now focused on setting up "specialised public markets."

He explained that these markets would not be for farmers but for small, probably unemployed persons who can earn a few dinars by selling produce only in tiny shacks in densely populated areas. "It is creating new retailers who can sell at low prices as they do not have high expenses to pay such as rent, salaries, taxes and electricity or phone bills..." etc., the market

(Continued on page 9)

Iraq wants \$50m rise in trade protocol with Jordan

By Tareq Ayyoub

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Iraqi government has asked for an increase in the volume of a \$255 million trade protocol with Jordan to supply its citizens with more food, medicine and other humanitarian needs, a Chamber of Industry member said here Monday.

Marwan Khirfan, a member of a five-person delegation from the Chamber of Industry, that visited Iraq recently, said that the Baghdad government requested a \$50 million increase.

Mr. Khirfan told the Jordan Times that a committee representing the chamber and Jordanian government will formalise a plan to increase the number of items in the protocol. He added that the chamber's proposals will be submitted to the government in the next few days.

The protocol, signed following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, involved a volume in excess of \$400 million, but it was reduced last year to \$200 million after Jordan complained that the protocol put a strain on the Kingdom's foreign reserves. Earlier this year, the volume was increased by \$55 million.

Last Saturday, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali told a gathering of Jordanian businesspersons that Jordan was ready to reconsider increasing the trade protocol but stressed that "thorough negotiations" between the two sides were necessary before any changes could be applied.

Mr. Khirfan said the Jordanian delegation to Iraq, headed by Chairman Khalid Abu Hassan, also discussed with Iraqi officials the U.N. rejection of proposed Jordanian contracts to supply Baghdad with food and medicine in line with the oil-for-food agreement.

"The Iraqi side informed us that about seven to eight contracts, worth more than

(Continued on page 9)

UAE oil income hits record in 1996

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) oil export earnings climbed to a record level in 1996 after crude prices hit a 13-year high, official figures showed Monday.

Income peaked at 57 billion dirhams (\$15.5 billion), allowing the Gulf country to wipe out a budget deficit, widen its trade surplus and boost its economy by more than 10 per cent, the central bank said.

The 1996 income is 9.8 billion dirhams (\$2.7 billion) higher than 1995 revenues of 47.2 billion dirhams (\$12.8 billion) and it replaces a previous record level of 54 billion dirhams (\$14.7 billion) in 1991.

Oil prices in 1996 shot to their highest level since the oil boom of the early 1980s due to a sharp decline in Western crude inventories, a prolonged cold spell in the northern hemisphere and Iraq's absence from the oil market.

Oil prices averaged nearly \$20 in 1996 compared with \$16.8 in 1995 and around \$18 in 1991, when the UAE and Saudi Arabia hiked production by nearly four mil-

lion barrels per day (bpd) to make up for the halt of Iraqi and Kuwait crude supplies during the Gulf crisis.

Prices were as high as \$30 in the early 1980s but the UAE's production was nearly half its current output of 2.16 million bpd.

"In nominal terms, the oil income of the UAE was the highest since it started commercial oil production," a UAE banker said. "But I don't think the income this year will be as high because prices are expected to be lower."

Despite attempts to diversify its economy, oil sales still provide more than two-thirds of the UAE's total income and this has made its economy and budget highly vulnerable to crude price fluctuations.

The surge in 1996 earnings enabled the UAE to turn a projected budget deficit into a surplus of 3.55 billion dirhams (\$967 million).

It also combined with an expansion in non-oil sectors to push up the gross domestic product (GDP) by 10.9 per cent to 163.6 billion dirhams (\$44.57 billion) in

1996 from 147.5 billion dirhams (\$40.19 billion) in 1995.

The oil sector alone jumped by 20.7 per cent, according to the central bank.

"The GDP also reached its highest level in current prices in 1996. Considering inflation, I think there was a real growth of more than six per cent in the overall economy," a UAE bank manager said.

The surge in oil prices, coupled with higher exports of liquefied natural gas and liquefied petroleum gas, also boosted UAE total exports to 125.8 billion dirhams (\$34.2 billion) in 1996 from 109.4 billion dirhams (\$29.8 billion) in 1995.

Despite a sharp rise in 1996 imports, the trade surplus grew to nearly 20 billion dirhams (\$5.44 billion) from 10.4 billion dirhams (\$2.83 billion).

Official sources said they expect the oil income to range between \$13 billion and \$14 billion in 1997, assuming prices of \$17-\$18 a barrel. The economy will also slow down to between five and six per cent, they said.

The UAE is among the top 10 oil exporters in the world and its crude reserves of 98 billion barrels account for nearly 10 per cent of the global recoverable oil resources.

REUTERS REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates Prices as at 19/05/97 18:05

Currency	US Dollar	DE Mark	GB Sterling	CH Franc	JP Yen	CA Dollar	IT Lira	NL Guilder	FR Franc
US Dollar	1.0000	1.7062	0.6103	1.4270	116.20	1.3715	1674.00	1.9188	5.7471
DE Mark	0.5851	1.0000	0.5374	0.8365	93.80	0.9335	990.55	1.2242	3.3679
GB Sterling	1.6385	2.7970	1.0000	2.3357	193.48	2.2472	2741.01	3.1415	9.4103
CH Franc	0.3304	118.41	0.4271	1.0000	61.41	0.8596	1371.34	134.07	4.0215
JP Yen	0.0086	1.4676	0.5246	1.2278	1.0000	1.1789	14.39	164.90	4.9398
CA Dollar	0.7291	1.2335	0.4455	1.0316	1.18	1.0000	125.10	1.3670	4.1536
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0201	0.3846	0.8854	1442.79	0.8195	1.0000	11.46	3.4338
NL Guilder	0.5212	88.30	0.5190	74.45	60.56	0.7147	871.41	1.0000	2.9348
FR Franc	0.1740	0.2970	0.1062	24.8512	20.21	0.2384	33.37	33.3700	1.0000

Middle Eastern Currencies

Currency	US Dollar	Jordan Dinar	GB Sterling	Bahraini Dinar	Qatar Dinar	Kuwait Dinar	Emirate Dinar	Lebanese L1000	Egyptian
US Dollar	1.0000	0.7080	0.5370	0.3685	0.3021	0.3678	1538.00	3.3895	1.0000
Jordan Dinar	1.4124	1.0000	0.5325	0.3685	0.3021	0.3678	1538.00	3.3895	1.0000
GB Sterling	0.2668	0.1888	1.0000	0.57	0.8013	0.74	4079.34	8.9008	0.9038
Bahraini Dinar	2.65	1.8736	0.5483	1.0000	0.8013	0.74	4079.34	8.9008	0.9038
Qatar Dinar	0.2748	0.1946	1.0308	1.0308	1.0000	1.01	422.70	0.9316	1.0000
Kuwait Dinar	0.3104	0.2343	1.2453	1.2453	1.2453	1.24	3691.37	0.9316	1.0000
Emirate Dinar	0.2723	0.1828	1.0211	1.0211	1.0211	1.02	418.75	0.9229	1.0000
Lebanese L1000	0.85	0.6403	2.4385	2.4385	2.4385	2.43	2.3880	1.0000	1.0000
Egyptian	0.2380	0.2089	1.1085	1.1112	1.0735	1.0691	453.78	1.0000	1.0000

Energy

Oil	Brent	WTI	Bonny	Dubai	UAE
Brent	20.45	20.85			
WTI	21.95	22.05			
Bonny	20.45	20.85			
Dubai	19.20	19.40			
UAE	19.50	19.00			

Mid-East Currencies

Currency	US Dollar	SA Riyal	AE Dirham	KW Dinar	BH Dinar	CY Pound
SA Riyal	0.2668	1.0000	0.16273	0.36821	0.36821	31.0128
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.46485	1.0000	0.36821	0.36821	31.0128
KW Dinar	3.3104	5.64972	2.62022	1.0000	1.0000	368.547
BH Dinar	0.3770	4.52694	1.51891	3.70075	1.0000	368.547
CY Pound	1.9654	3.3525	1.199	2.8054	2.8054	1.0000

Metal Prices

Metal	Price	Unit
Gold (oz's)	341	341.5
Silver (oz's)	4.36	4.36
Platinum (oz's)	388.75	388.75
AL (3 Months)	1682	1683
CU (3 Months)	2481	2485
Zinc (3 Months)	1348	1347
Lead (3 Months)	625	626
Ni (3 Months)	7910	7920

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)

Currency	USD	GBP	JPY	DEM	FRF	CHF	ITL
USD	5.59	5.71	5.87	6.00	6.15		
GBP	6.19	6.38	6.50	6.56	6.81		
JPY	0.38	0.49	0.51	0.59	0.65		
DEM	2.95	2.95	3.06	3.14	3.19		
FRF	3.20	3.25	3.34	3.40	3.37		
CHF	1.58	1.50	1.58	1.82	1.68		
ITL	6.53	6.57	6.49	6.40	6.31		

Main Equity Indices

Index	Value	Change	Value	Change
New York	DOW JONES	7172.83	-21.84	-0.3
New York	S&P 500	828.97	-0.78	-0.09
London	FT-SE 100	4464.4	-47.5	-1.01
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	20489.75	165.02	0.81
Paris	CAC 40	2784.28	8.27	0.3
Frankfurt	DAX	3804.55	42.44	1.19

Energy

Commodity	Price	Unit
Coffee (c/lb)	273.42	Spot
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1454	Spot
Sugar (\$/ton)	323.5	Spot
Wheat (\$/ton)	148	Spot
Soya (c/lb)	23.72	Spot
Tea (c/lb)	157	Spot
Barley (\$/bsh)	0	Spot
Rice (\$/ton)	480	Spot

* JOD Cross Rates

Currency	US Dollar	GB Sterling	DE Mark	CH Franc	JP Yen	FR Franc	NL Guilder	IT Lira
US Dollar	0.708	0.710						
GB Sterling	1.1589	1.1647						
DE Mark	0.4179	0.42						
CH Franc	0.4982	0.5007						
JP Yen	0.124	0.1246						
FR Franc	0.3717	0.3736						
NL Guilder	0.4239	0.428						
IT Lira								

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

APARTMENT FOR RENT

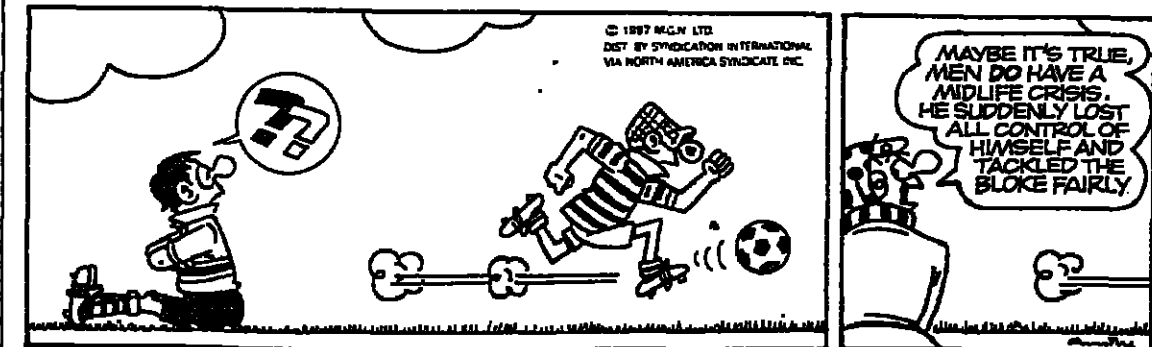
Fully furnished two bedroom apartment in Jabal Al Weibdeh, Amman.

Please call 691984 or 665005

Peanuts



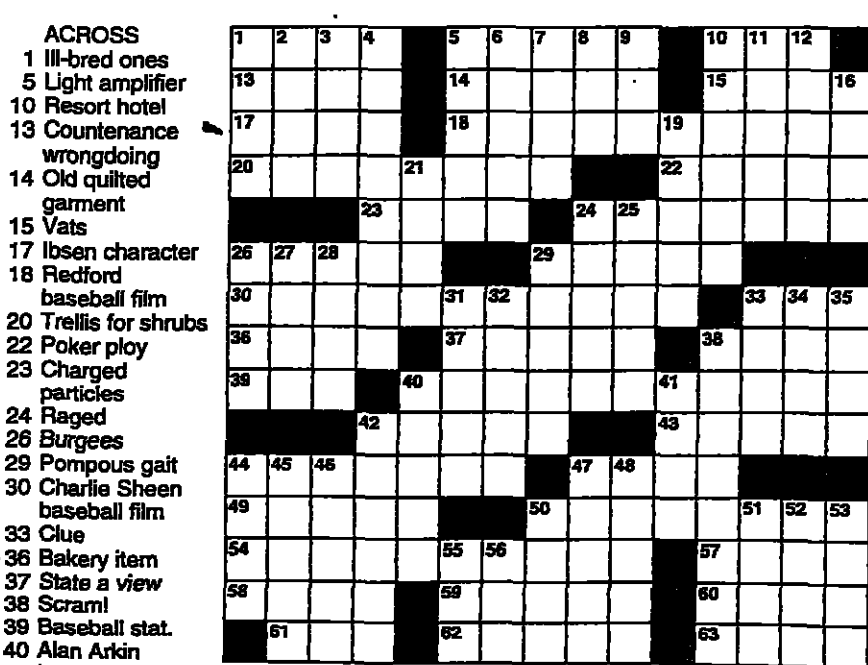
Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



THE Daily Crossword



by Gayle Waters Dean

1 Ill-bred ones	8 Long time	15 ITALO	22 AMP	29 IMP
5 Light amplifier	9 Genetic letters	16 ITALO	23 LOOP	30 CRE
10 Resort hotel	10 Scottish royal family	17 GISTS	24 OLOR	31 HILT
13 Countenance wrongdoing	11 Feast of Lots	18 CHICANERY	25 ISEE	32 ECHER
14 Old quilted garment	12 Humble vehicle	19 MARCEL	26 TERRA	33 AGORA
15 Vats	13 Fly catcher?	20 OPAL	27 EASY	34 REMODEL
17 Ibsen character	14 Preoccupied	21 ERECT	28 TIER	35 AIDA
18 Redford baseball film	15 More devoted flunker	22 KORAN	29 ARNESS	36 VOTE
20 Trellis for shrubs	16 Holiday	23 AULD	24 CHICORIES	37 ILLIE
22 Poker ploy	17 City on the Jumna	25 LUTE	26 PEEL	38 AMATI
23 Charged particles	18 Long-billed shore bird	27 SEDA	28 DALAI	39
24 Raged	19 Satellites	29	30	31
26 Burgees	20 Historical period	31	32	33
28 Pompous gait	21 Norse god	33	34	35
30 Charlie Sheen baseball film	22 Waterloo's state	35	36	37
33 Clue	23 Equine	37	38	39
36 Bakery item	24 Placed emphasis on	39	40	41
37 State a view	25 Fountain finds?	41	42	43
38 Scram!		43	44	45
39 Baseball stat.		45	46	47
40 Alan Arkin baseball film		47	48	49
42 de Leon		49	50	51
43 Assortment		51	52	53
44 Do away with		53	54	55
47 Border		55	56	57
49 Sophia		57	58	59
50 Enjoyable		59	60	61
54 Seltzer baseball film		61	62	63
57 Painful reminder		63		
58 Dill, old style				
59 Forum				
60 Border lake				
61 Begley and Ames				
62 Gladiator's stage				
63 Printer's direction				

HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, MAY 20, 1997

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Depend upon your intuitive faculties and you can make real progress at this time. Come to right decisions with your mate.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Plan how best to please your fellow associates and thereby gain fine benefits in the days ahead. Get the right solution to public affairs.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Plan early today how to show appreciation to those who have been kind to you, and also be of help to friends who may have been kind to you, and also be of help to friends who may be in difficulty.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Plan fun which will relieve tensions you are under today and restore your peace of mind. Bring out some talent you seldom use.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Know what is pleasing to your loved ones and try to make them happy at this time. Improve the appearance of your home so that it is more valuable.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) This is a good day today to study just what you want most to do in the days ahead and get wheels rolling in such direction.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Study your property well and know how to improve it and add to it in the near future. Grammar better information for some new project.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Know what your finest abilities are at this time and use them to make a happier and more prosperous life for yourself.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Sit in the privacy of your study and plan the days ahead far more intelligently, use vision. Be clever in the activities which you are involved in.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Keep in touch with persons who appreciate your capabilities today and impress them with your own talents for your success.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Relax and think about how to make the next day Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation. ys brighter for yourself and formulate a practical which can be very prosperous.

Birthstone of May: Emerald — Citrine

Arab Gulf states set to boost chemical exports to Asia

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Arab Gulf states are set to increase their exports of petrochemicals and refined products to South Asia as new World Trade Organisation rules will boost demand, a Gulf official said.

Most of the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states have embarked on multi-billion-dollar projects to expand their petrochemical plants and refineries and set up new units to take advantage of the growing Asian consumption, already among the fastest in the world, said Anwar Abdullah, director of the oil and gas department at the Riyadh-based GCC secretariat.

Writing in the quarterly

bulletin of the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries, Mr. Abdullah said refinery and petrochemical expansion projects in Japan and other Asian countries were not enough to meet demand.

"The petrochemical and refining industry in Asia has reached a bottleneck as a result of a delay in construction of those units and problems associated with government procedures regarding this industry," he said.

"A quick solution for such problems is not expected. There is now an opportunity for the GCC countries to invest in new projects within the coming 10 or 15 years to secure a big share of the

prosperous Asian market," he added.

Mr. Abdullah said GCC states had already become key suppliers of petrochemicals and refined products to South Asia given their strong oil partnership.

He cited figures by the giant Saudi Arabian Basic Industries Corporation (SABIC) showing around 46 per cent of its chemical products were being exported to Asia, which also imported 22 per cent of SABIC's plastic products and 59 per cent of its fertilisers. It has also forecast a further growth in such exports.

"There are great hopes that Gulf petrochemical sales to Asia will sharply grow because of the new

WTO trade rules, which will lead in two or three years to the lifting of customs barriers in some South Asian countries," he said.

"The strong and long relationship between the GCC and Asia will also play a key part in securing a balance between supply and demand in Asia," Mr. Abdullah added.

GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) — produce more than 10 million tonnes of petrochemicals and their refining capacity is estimated at over two million barrels per day.

Production levels are set to surge in the next

few years as most of them have announced plans to build new units and expand existing facilities.

Kuwait and Qatar have said they would set up two new petrochemical plants while the UAE announced two projects with a production capacity of nearly one million tonnes per year of ethylene and polyethylene. The plants, estimated to cost more than \$1 billion, are the UAE's first petrochemical projects.

UAE officials said the two projects would target South East Asian markets, where demand for petrochemicals and refined products was growing by an average 5.5 per cent annually in the first half of 1990s.

"There are several reasons which make us believe that the proposed expansions in capacities in Asia will not reach the expected levels because of the high risks of new refineries and huge costs," Mr. Abdullah said.

"Furthermore, the private sector's role in such countries as China, India and Indonesia has until recently remained relatively limited. We strongly believe that the GCC countries are capable of facing those challenges and play an important role in meeting the growing Asian demand for petrochemicals, heating oil, petrol and other products," he concluded.

Government considers setting up specialised produce public markets

(Continued from page 8)

chief elaborated.

Mr. Abu Osba said the shacks would probably be about 4x4 square metres without any storage facility and specifically limited to selling vegetables and fruits. He estimated that each market will include about 40 shacks in order to create the largest possible scope of supply and widest possible outlets to create competition and force down prices.

"You can go to Al Hussein Camp market and see for yourself the good quality of produce at the lowest prices," Mr. Abu Osba told the writer of this article.

He said the Municipality of Greater Amman and the Ministry of Supply are currently scouting several locations where four or five specialised public markets can be set up. Possible locations were mentioned in the Arabic press recently to be in Al Wihdat, Al Naser, the Istiglal Street, Marka, Gardens Street and Mecca Street.

"We don't target affluent areas such as the Abdoun neighbourhood where people there have their special buying behaviour," he indicated. "We want to stress

the densely populated, low-income areas where much of the complaints come from."

Mr. Abu Osba explained that the basic idea is to encourage a wider base and an increase in the number of retailers so as there can be no monopoly or "an agreement between a few numbers of retailers to fix prices."

Asked about the reaction of farmers to the flotation of prices, Mr. Abu Osba said the farmers are finally relieved from years of losses and misery and they are satisfied that finally their situation can improve.

When told that the middlemen were probably the most dissatisfied, Mr. Abu Osba disagreed and indicated that middlemen would be happy to see prices going up as their percentage commission would be higher.

Mr. Abu Osba clarified that on the face of it, the consumers seem to be the losers but in fact they are effectively in control because farmers and middlemen have no choice over the produce but consumers are the ones who can move the prices according to their buying behaviour.

Iraq wants to raise amount of protocol with Jordan

(Continued from page 8)

\$60 million, have been rejected because the U.N. claims that some Jordanian firms were practising illegal trade with Iraq," Mr. Khirfan said. He did not elaborate.

Earlier this year, Jordanian firms won 43 contracts to supply Iraq with \$120 million worth of food, medicine and detergents. At least 12 contracts were approved by the U.N. Sanctions Committee. The remainder are still to be approved.

Mr. Khirfan said the Chamber of Industry team

proposed that Iraq supply Jordan with petroleum derivatives, which if approved by the Jordanian government, will raise the protocol volume to more than \$700 million.

"The Iraqi side told us that they are ready to accept supplying Jordan with petroleum derivatives pending a U.N. approval," Mr. Khirfan said.

During their visit, the Jordanian team met with Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz, Trade and Industry Minister Mohammad Mahdi Saleh and other Iraqi officials, Mr. Khirfan said.

Correction

IN THE article entitled "TRC awards first contract for pay phones" published in Monday's issue of the Jordan Times, two facts were mistakenly mentioned. First, it was Alpha International Co. that submitted the lowest price of a 0.00425 and not Trans Jordan, which came second with a price of 0.014888. Second, Alpha International will be competing with Trans Jordan at the same level in all areas and not, as erroneously mentioned, "to the public in their different areas." The Jordan Times regrets any inconvenience caused.

Daily Beat

Jordan New Cable Company prefers to keep net profit to avoid paying high interest

** IN ORDER to consolidate its financial position and to lessen the burden of loans and the "astronomical" interest, the general assembly of the Jordan New Cable Company approved the recommendation of the board of directors to transfer the JD445,493 net profit for 1996 to retained earnings.

Board Chairman Mohammad Sab'awi told the shareholders that total sales dropped from JD6.6 million in 1995 to JD5.5 million last year but he did not explain the specific reasons behind this sharp decline. He said local sales accounted for 93.2 per cent of total sales and indicated that exports to Iraq could have been high had it not been for the government which stopped a JD3.5 million export letter of credit to Iraq. "After repeated contacts, the government allowed the company to continue with the deal of which JD1.3 million worth of goods are still to be completed," Mr. Sab'awi said.

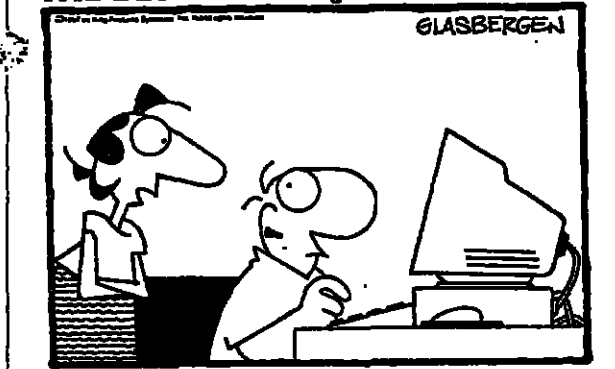
He mentioned that the company was working on opening local outlets and new outside markets noting that more patience was needed to confront the hindrances, frustrations and still competition on the local scene and in export markets. The chairman urged the government to prepare all what can be useful to assist industrial companies to succeed and stressed that measures be expedited and be translated into action on the ground.

Mr. Sab'awi told the general assembly that despite the drop in sales, the company's operational profit amounted to JD979,240 or 19.58 per cent of total sales. Measured against the JD445,493 net profit the percentage came out to be 8.9 per cent of total sales. The rates in 1995 were 11.64 and 4.49 per cent respectively.

According to the annual report, the company succeeded in bringing down its financial obligations especially the loans, account and bills payable. In this context, the total of current liabilities declined from JD3.47 million in 1995 to JD1.71 million in 1996. Receivables were also lower as they stood at JD0.66 million compared to JD1.12 million in 1995.

Mr. Sab'awi said the products of the company were well accepted in the Yemeni market and that many firms showed interest also when the products were exhibited recently in Ramallah (Al Aswaq + Al Dustour).

THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



"They say you can find anything on the Internet. See if you can find the personality you had when I married you."

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles. Write letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

SMACH

KNUSK

WROFUR

KUTBEC

Answer: _____

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: TRAIT PANG GAINED DENTAL

Answer: What the computer operator got from her mancrust — DIGITAL DATA

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SIDEISANI											
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179											
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 19/05/1997											
PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	PAST 12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF SHARES	NO. OF TRADED	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE	
269,000	213,000	ARAB BANK	11.9	1.54	4	180	46740	261.00	259.00	2.00	-
2,100	1,680	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	8	0.00	4	2950	5310	1.79	1.80	0.01	+
3,600	2,760	BANK OF JORDAN	10.8	0.00	3	267	794	3.02	3.00	0.02	-
1,210	880	MID. EAST INV. BK.	70.9	0.00	7	6200	6792	1.05	1.08	0.03	+
2,480	2,120	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	8.2	7.62	3	1175	2607	2.22	2.22	-	-
5,100	4,260	THE HOUSING BK.	14.6	3.96	15	8400	41165	4.90	4.90	-	-
2,950	2,440	JOR. KWAIT BANK	18.8	0.00	2	400	1040	2.62	2.60	0.02	-
1,020	790	JOR. GULF BANK	4.8	8.75	10	10539	8430	.81	.80	0.01	-
4,050	3,480	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	14.8	3.30	10	3363	12249	1.64	1.64	-	-
2,950	1,000	SEIT. AL-MAL (BEITWA)	6	14.85	1	250	253	1.00	1.01	0.01	+
BANK SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 195.33	%CHG: -0.55	59	33724	125379				
2,200	1,850	ARAB LIFE INSUR.	7.1	5.49	1	500	910	1.90	1.82	0.08	-
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 114.03	%CHG: -0.40	1	500	910				
7,500	6,000	VEHLS. OWNERS FED.	7.8	4.90	2	747	5341	7.15	7.15	-	-
1,480	930	HATL. PORTFOLIO	9	0.00	48	62150	67661	1.08	1.11	0.03	+
9,300	6,900	ALARA	12.5	7.34	1	100	700	6.90	7.00	0.10	+
3,720	2,900	ARAB INTEL. INV. EDUC.	7.9	0.00	2	1500	5757	3.05	3.03	0.02	-
1,220	960	SARSA EDUCATION	15.8	0.00	1	2000	1960	.99	.98	0.01	-
2,230	1,630	UNIFIED CO.	7.8	6.67	8	1200	1980	1.67	1.65	0.02	-
1,110	700	UNION LAND DEV.	9	0.00	1	200	136	.70	.68	0.02	-
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 110.47	%CHG: -0.06	63	68297	83535				
3,820	3,060	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	25.6	2.89	22	13847	53597	3.80	3.80	-	-
3,800	2,710	JOR. PROGRESS MIXES	9.4	2.94	11	12210	41514	3.40	3.40	-	-
6,330	4,950	ARAB PORTH CO.	14.8	3.15	24	23700	150224	6.30	6.35	0.05	+
10,400	8,720	JOR. PETROL REFINERY	9.0	9.55	8	595	5543	9.38	9.31	0.07	-
3,160	2,650	INDUSTRIAL COM. COR.	9	0.00	3	312	592	1.94	1.90	0.04	-
7,250	5,650	JOR. CERAMIC IND.	7.0	2.92	2	333	2278	7.04	6.85	0.19	-
2,100	1,410	JOR. PIPES MANUF.	17.5	8.57	3	75	104	1.41	1.41	-	-
3,600	2,800	JOR. PAPER IND.	15.8	0.00	1	500	1400	2.80	2.80	-	-
960	480	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	10.8	0.00	4	3000	1530	.81	.81	-	-
870	540	NATIONAL TILES	8.3	10.71	4	1500	838	.56	.56	-	-
1,540	700	INTERMED. PETRO. CHEM.	9	0.00	2	450	324	.72	.72	-	-
3,730	2,130	MULTI. CARB. WIRE. HFC	16.7	0.00	2	300	826	2.74	2.74	-	-
1,170	570	JOR. SULPHUR CHEM.	9	0.00	29	18700	10109	.64	.62	0.01	-
1,070	1,120	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	18.0	4.95	2	250	363	1.41	1.41	-	-
2,660	1,410	UNIV. MOUL. IND.	2	1.18	5	1600	2345	1.49	1.45	0.04	-
1,730	1,130	JOR. TILES RESOURCES	15.5	8.70	17	6650	7661	1.16	1.15	0.01	-
1,230	840	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	25.8	0.00	15	7500	6465	.87	.86	0.01	-
2,090	1,630	EL. TAY READY WEAR	7	0.00	12	1595	2556	1.63	1.60	0.03	-
1,330	1,080	IMTL. TOBACCO	27.5	0.00	4	6000	7020	1.18	1.17	0.01	-
1,380	860	UNION CH. & VEG.	28.2	0.00	8	926	827	.90	.89	0.01	-
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 121.13	%CHG: +0.18	181	97136	299447				
GRAND TOTAL			INDEX: 155.92	%CHG: -0.23	304	199657	505271				
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 19/05/1997											
.610	.370	CENTRAL GEN. STORAGE	9	0.00	3	3300	1320	.40	.40	-	-
.790	.410	JOR. TRADE INC.	12.0	0.00	2	550	248	.45	.45	-	-
.840	.660	UNION INV. 501	9	0.00	14	27305	4642	.67	.67	-	-
.810	.370	ARAB FIN. INVEST.	9	0.00	15	8700	4092	.49	.48	0.01	-
.950	.730	AL-SABAB INV. 751	8	0.00	5	2042	1070	.77	.78	0.01	+
.950	.610	AL-DAMLIYAH 751	14.5	0.00	10	11600	4515	.64	.64	-	-
.730	.510	ARAB FOOD & MED.	9	0.00	9	2400	1326	.56	.55	0.01	-
.690	.430	ARAB TRTEL. INV. TRD.	55.0	0.00	4	500	1300	.72	.71	0.01	-
.810	.400	WATL. MULT. ENG. WATICO	8	0.00	58	80767	43745	.56	.54	0.02	-
.640	.430	WATEK DIES & MOWLES	8	0.00	2	350	193	.58	.55	0.03	-
.970	.710	JORDAN STEEL	8	0.00	12	10287	7303	.72	.71	0.01	-
.730	.600	KUWAIT FOOD. 751	8	0.00	1	450	176	.69	.64	0.05	-
1,280	.850	UNION TOBACCO 751	8	0.00	2	2400	1488	.87	.87	-	-
.770	.550	RAST PHARM. 651	8	0.00	14	42250	10216	.60	.59	0.01	-
.620	.390	INDS. INC.	25.3	0.00	9	6600	2722	.42	.41	0.01	-
.950	.760	INDS. CERAMIC	21.0	0.00	7	2900	2347	.82	.80	0.02	-
.820	.590	HATL. PORTFOLIO	2	0.00	1	250	165	.66	.66	-	-
1,000	.810	WATL. ALBERTON. 751	7	0.00	10	29000	17392	.84	.83	0.01	-
.870	.530	MID. EAST COMPLEX	7.7	0.00	13	19450	12840	.66	.66	-	-
GRAND TOTAL			191	255601	118097						

T: New 12 months high
+ : New 12 months low
* : Listed during the past 12 months
P/E ratio is 100 or more
S : Negative P/E
Z : Earning is zero or N/A for the most recent year

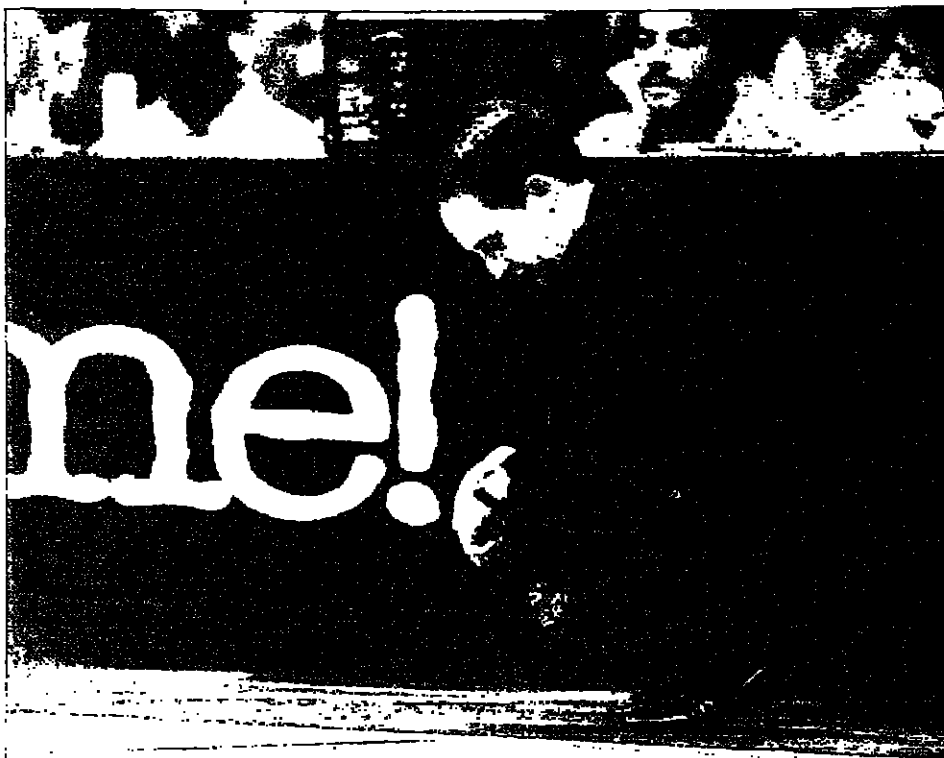
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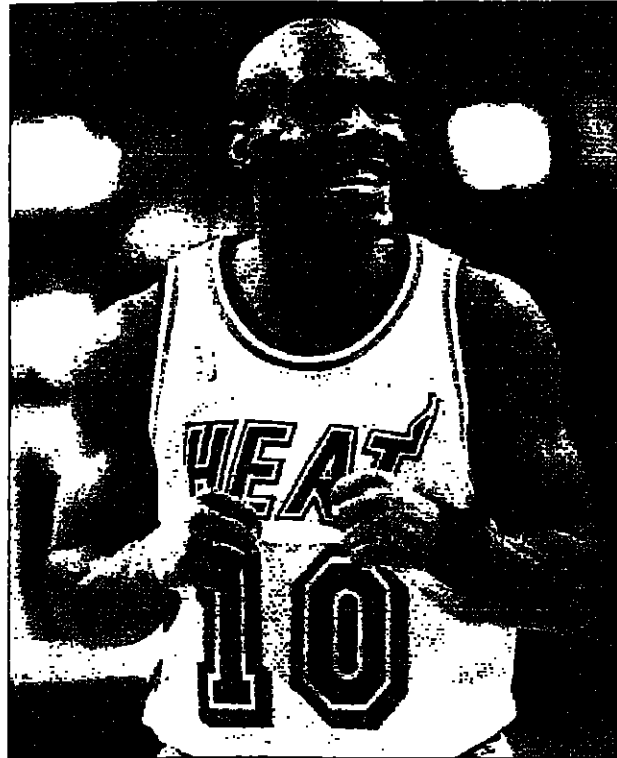
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New York Knicks' head coach Jeff Van Gundy hangs his head in the final minute of Game 7 of the Eastern Conference Semifinals against the Miami Heat. The Heat defeated the Knicks 101-90 (Reuters photo)



Miami Heat guard Tim Hardaway celebrates after hitting a three-point shot. Hardaway had 38 points in the Heat's 101-90 defeat of the Knicks (Reuters photo)

Heat eliminate Knicks 101-90

MIAMI (R) — The Miami Heat came back from 3-1 down in the series to beat the New York Knicks 101-90 Sunday to advance to the Eastern Conference finals.

Miami never trailed after the opening moments and led by as many as 21 points before coasting home.

The Heat became the sixth team in playoff history to erase a 3-1 deficit and win a series.

The defending champion Chicago Bulls will host the heat on Tuesday for the conference finals.

"After this comeback and the series against Orlando that went to the limit, I think we have matured enough to be ready for Chicago," said Miami guard, Dan Majerle.

"We broke their defence early and penetrated," he said. "We felt we would win right from the start." The Knicks contributed mightily to their own demise by committing 21 turnovers on Sunday and by allowing three players

to be banned for game six and two for Sunday's game as the result of a melee in game five.

The NBA banned forward P.J. Brown of the heat for the last two games.

Tim Hardaway scored a playoff career-high 38 points and Alonzo Mourning added 22 for the Heat. Voshon Lenard scored 13 points, Jamal Mashburn added 11 and Austin 10 for the Heat, who made 11-of-24 three-pointers.

"We came out with great energy, the crowd helped us," Hardaway said. "It was easier than we expected. We were energised, they seemed flat for some reason."

Knicks centre Patrick Ewing — who guaranteed a win — returned from his game six suspension with 37 points and 17 rebounds. But he didn't get much help, as John Starks and Larry Johnson were suspended and Allan Houston's 25 points overshadowed a terrible first half. Houston and guard

Charley Ward also sat out game six.

"I'm disappointed, upset, hurt bewildered by all that happened," Ewing said. "I got suspended for being a few feet from our bench. Yes, this makes it a long summer."

It also will be a long summer for Knicks' coach Jeff Van Gundy, but he rejects any new York alibis for the loss.

"Our players are trying to make excuses, but there are none. We got beat," he said. "They had three guys pouring it on offence and we didn't handle it. We gave them the ball too many times, Hardaway and Mourning played great."

The sellout crowd at Miami Arena, which showered the Knicks with debris at the end of game five, serenaded them with a derisive "good-bye" chant as time expired. The heat reached the conference finals for the first time in franchise history.

"We are very down, very disappointed, I can't really handle this feeling,"

said Knicks guard Charley Ward. "What beat us today was too many turnovers."

After taking a quick 6-2 lead, the Knicks fell apart.

The Heat scored the next 18 points and never lost control. Mourning, who was hampered by foul trouble throughout the series, scored seven points in the burst, including his second three-pointer in as many games to give Miami a 20-6 lead with 4:26 remaining.

Mourning hit a crucial three-pointer in Miami's 95-90 victory in game six. In the season, he was just 1-of-9 from behind the arc.

The Knicks were fortunate to close to 25-14 after one period and cut the deficit to 38-31 with 3:25 left on a 15-foot jumper by John Wallace, who started for Johnson.

But Miami surged again, closing the half with an 11-1 spurt. The first three-pointer of Isaac Austin's career gave the Heat a 49-32 bulge. Houston was 1-of-9

from the field as the Knicks shot 34 per cent (13-of-38) and committed 11 turnovers. Miami managed 40 per cent (18-of-40) and had just five turnovers.

After picking up just two fouls in the first half, Mourning was hit with two in the first 3:02 of the third quarter and went to the bench with the Heat nursing a 51-40 lead.

The Knicks pulled to 55-47 on a three-pointer by Houston with 5:24 to play before Hardaway took over.

In the final four minutes of the quarter, Hardaway buried four three-pointers and another basket, single-handedly restoring the Heat's lead at 71-54 entering the final quarter. He finished 6-of-10 from behind the arc.

With no one besides Ewing and Houston offering any offence, the Knicks got no closer than nine in the fourth quarter.

Malone edges out Jordan for NBA MVP award

NEW YORK (R) — Utah Jazz power forward Karl Malone edged Chicago Bulls superstar guard Michael Jordan for the NBA's Most Valuable Player award on Sunday.

It was the second-closest balloting since media began voting on the award in the 1980-81 season.

Malone and Jordan were the only players named on all 115 ballots.

Malone received 986 points and 63 first-place votes, compared to 957 points and 52 first-place votes for Jordan, from a panel of broadcasters and sports writers throughout the United States and Canada.

The 29-point margin of victory ranked second only to Magic Johnson's 22-point win over Charles Barkley in 1990.

The 33-year-old Malone, a 10-time All-Star and original Olympic Dream Team member, is the first forward to win the MVP since Barkley in 1993.

"My wife was asking me what the trophy looked like, and I can honestly say this is the first time I've seen it, so I didn't even know what to tell her," said Malone, who was presented with the award Sunday in Salt Lake City.

Detroit Pistons forward Grant Hill was third with 376 points.

Followed by Miami Heat guard Tim Hardaway (238), Charlotte Hornets forward Glen Rice (134) and Seattle SuperSonics guard Gary Payton (105).

Malone, whose previous high finish in MVP voting was third in 1989 and 1995, averaged 27.4 points, 9.9 rebounds and a career-best 4.5 assists in leading the Jazz to a team-record 64-18 Mark this season.

He shot 55 per cent from the field and 76 percent from the line.

Malone ranked second in scoring, sixth in field-goal percentage and 11th in rebounding.

The 115-member voting panel consisted of 28 national media members and three media members who cover the NBA regularly from each of the league's 29 cities.

Nicknamed "the mailman" for delivering consistent efficiency, Malone also moved ahead of Jerry West into 10th place on the NBA's all-time scoring list with 25,592 points and is only 22 points behind Alex English for ninth.

Jordan was seeking his fifth MVP award. He previously won the honour in 1988, 1991, 1992 and 1996.

Jordan won his unprecedented ninth scoring title with a 29.7 average this season. He also averaged 5.9 rebounds and 4.3 assists and led the Bulls to an NBA-best 69-13 mark.

The MVP trophy is named in honour of the late Maurice Podoloff, the first commissioner of the NBA who served from 1946 until his retirement in 1963.

Juventus thwarted by Parma, Porto clinch title

Real Madrid, Eindhoven near crowns

LONDON (R) — Juventus were thwarted by Parma in their attempts to wrap up the Serie A title. Porto clinched the Portuguese Championship and PSV moved to within sight of the Dutch title.

In England, where the championship is already over, Chelsea won the F.A. Cup.

Following is a round-up of action from the major European leagues this weekend:

Italy

Parma spoiled the party for 50,000 Juventus fans when they drew 1-1 in Turin to prevent Juve clinching their 24th Serie A title with two games to spare.

Instead of erupting in a chorus of cheers, Juventus fans whistled and jeered their players after a lacklustre second half performance which delayed what still looks an inevitable title repeat for the Turin club.

The draw kept Parma two points ahead of Internazionale, who were held 1-1 at Roma.

Champions AC Milan saw their hopes of clinching a spot in the UEFA Cup virtually killed off when they were held 2-2 by Lazio.

England

Italian Roberto Di Matteo scored after just 43 seconds to set Chelsea on their way to a 2-0 victory over Middlesbrough in the F.A. Cup final at Wembley. The result handed Chelsea their first trophy in 26 years and gave Boro a unique but unwanted record.

They became the first side ever to lose both domestic Cup finals and get relegated in the same season.

Off the pitch Manchester United's enigmatic Frenchman Eric Cantona announced his surprise retirement from professional soccer.

Portugal

Porto clinched the championship title for a record third successive season when they beat Guimaraes 4-0 away.

The win left them 11 points clear of second-placed Sporting, who beat Salgueiros 3-0 away on Friday.

With only three matches to go Sporting cannot catch Porto, who have won the championship 16 times.

Two goals each from Brazilian striker Mario Jardel and Slovenian Zlatko Zahovic sealed Porto's historic victory and filled the streets of Oporto with hundreds of cheering fans.

Netherlands

PSV Eindhoven steamed nearer to their 14th league title when they beat Utrecht 6-1 thanks in part to a hat-trick by Belgian striker Luc Nilis.

PSV have 74 points with two matches to go, seven more than Feyenoord who have a game in hand and play Sparta Rotterdam on Monday.

Defeat for Feyenoord would hand the title to PSV.

Former European Cup winners and defending champions Ajax Amsterdam secured a place in the UEFA Cup next season by beating Twente Enschede 3-2.

Germany

Bayer Leverkusen kept up the pressure on Bayern Munich in the tight run-in to the title race with a 3-0 victory over struggling St Pauli.

Second-half goals from German international striker Ulf Kirsten, Dutchman Erik Meijer and midfielder Hans-Peter Lehmann helped Leverkusen narrow the gap on Bayern to just one point with two games remaining.

Bayern had taken a brief four-point lead with a 3-0 victory at Hansa Rostock

on Friday.

The Bavarians have a tougher last two games than their rivals, starting with a top-of-the-table clash with VfB Stuttgart in Munich next weekend.

Spain

Real Madrid took a giant step towards their title when they beat Valladolid 1-0 thanks to a disputed penalty converted by Davor Suker.

With four games left, Real are eight points clear of arch-rivals Barcelona, who face Celta Vigo on Monday.

Barcelona saw their chances of ensuring Spain's second European Cup place boosted when rivals Deportivo Coruna and Real Betis were held to home draws.

Third-placed Deportivo Coruna were held 0-0 by struggling Sporting Gijon while Real Betis let neighbours Sevilla score twice in the final five minutes in their 3-3 draw.

France

Nantes climbed into the second European Cup spot with a 3-0 home win over Montpellier as Paris St Germain crashed 1-0 at arch-rivals Marseille.

Tunisian Adel Sellimi, Chad's Japhet N'Doram with his 21st goal of the season and defender Bruno Carotti scored as Nantes extended their unbeaten run to 30 games.

Midfielder Eric Roy scored the only goal at the Velodrome with a 38th-minute penalty to ensure former European champions Marseille remain unbeaten against PSG in the league in the 1990s.

Champions Monaco won 3-1 at Nancy, who are relegated along with Lille, Caen and Nice.

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The Sunday Times, 14 April 1996

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Spurs win draft lottery as Celtics pick 3rd and 6th

SECAUCUS, New Jersey (R) — The San Antonio Spurs were rewarded for the worst season in franchise history when they bucked tremendous odds in favour of the Boston Celtics and on Sunday won the first pick in the NBA draft lottery on Sunday.

The Spurs now are in position, when the NBA draft is held on June 25, to pair Robinson with Wake Forest centre Tim Duncan, the consensus top player available.

Decimated by injuries, specifically to All-Star centre David Robinson, the Spurs finished 20-62, the third-worst record in the league.

Duncan would provide immediate help to the Spurs, who have been looking for a power forward to team with Robinson since trading Dennis Rodman in 1995.

Duncan, from the Virgin Islands, averaged 20.8 points, 14.7 rebounds and 3.3 blocks last season. He was the consensus player of the year in college basketball.

Duncan would have been the top pick in each of the last two years had he left school. Unlike most college stars with NBA futures, Duncan decided to complete his eligibility and is clearly the best player in the draft.

The Celtics (15-67) were favoured to win the lottery, holding their own slot and that of the Dallas Mavericks. But despite owning 264 of 1,000 possible combinations, their name did not come up until the drawing for the third pick.

The Philadelphia 76ers (22-60), who selected rookie of the year Allen Iverson with the top overall pick last year, will pick second.

The Vancouver Grizzlies (14-68) will pick fourth, followed by the Denver Nuggets (21-61) and the Celtics again.

"We'll have quality players coming on our team," said M.L. Carr, the former coach and general manager recently reassigned within the front office.

It was the second time the Spurs have won the lottery, which began in 1985.

Sunday's bad luck continued a remarkable string for the Celtics, who have never made the top overall pick. They had it in 1980, but dealt it to the Golden State Warriors in a trade.

The New Jersey Nets will pick seventh, followed by the Golden State Warriors, Toronto Raptors, Milwaukee Bucks, Sacramento Kings, Indiana Pacers And Cleveland Cavaliers.

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Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

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PLAZA

THE HEARTBREAK KID

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101 DALMATIANS

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Corretja crowned Italian Open champion

ROME (R) — Spain's Alex Corretja was crowned Italian Open singles champion for the first time on Sunday, defeating Marcelo Rios 7-5 7-5 6-3 to establish himself as favourite for the French Open which starts a week on Monday.

The number 10 seed, who has the season's best record on clay on which he has lost just four times, avenged his loss to Rios in Monte Carlo last month.

The victory also hoisted him among the elite of world tennis. When the new rankings are announced on Monday, the

Spaniard will be number eight in the world.

"I'm happy to win here but it's best to come back to earth before Paris," the 23-year-old from Barcelona said after his biggest win.

Corretja has reached four clay court finals this season, winning in Rome and Estoril and losing at Monte Carlo and Munich.

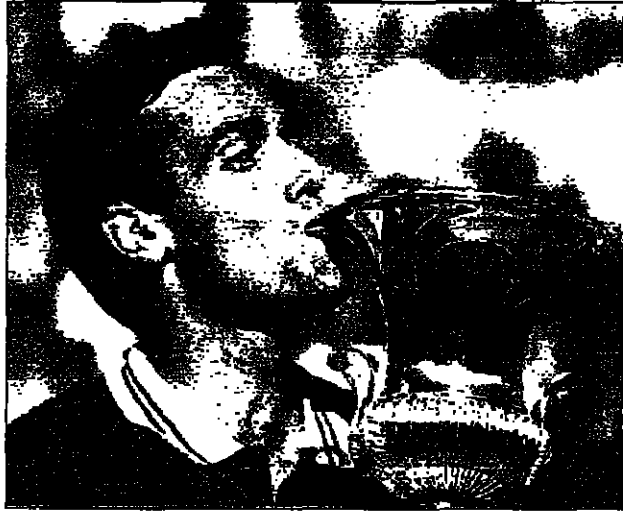
The Spaniard's willingness to rally from the baseline and wait for the right moment to attack paid off against an impetuous opponent who was eager to hit winners from every angle

of the court which invariably finished in the net.

The talented Chilean held breaks in the first two sets, even serving for the second at 5-4, but threw his advantage away with a string of unforced errors that saw him repeatedly swipe the clay with his racket in frustration.

The match turned Corretja's way on a mammoth 25-point third game in the first set, when he staved off three break points which would have left him two breaks and 3-0 down.

"If I win that long game,



Spain's Alex Corretja kisses the Italian Open trophy May 18. Corretja beat Chilean Marcelo Rios in the final 7-5 7-5 6-3 (Reuters photo)

I win the set and maybe the match," the dejected Rios said.

Instead Corretja fought back, taking the opening two sets with breaks in the

final games before triumphing on his third match-point — fittingly, when another Rios forehand flew wide of the target.

Orioles rally in 9th to sweep Seattle

SEATTLE (R) — Rafael Palmeiro's two-out, two-run single in the top of the ninth inning turned a one-run deficit into a one-run lead as the Baltimore Orioles swept the Mariners in Seattle for the first time in nearly eight years, 8-7, on Sunday.

The Orioles rallied from a 7-6 deficit in the ninth when Eric Davis led off with a single and moved to second on Cal Ripken's one-out single to centre field.

Norm Charlton (2-3) walked B.J. Surhoff to load the bases but struck out Jeffrey Hammonds. Palmeiro followed by lacing a 1-1 pitch into short centre field, scoring pinch-runner Tony Tarasco and Ripken, who just beat the throw to the plate for an 8-7 lead.

In Toronto, Matt Williams homered twice and drove in three runs and Chad Ogea pitched 6 1/3 innings for his second straight win as the Cleveland Indians posted an 8-6 victory over the Toronto Blue Jays Sunday.

Williams blasted a two-run shot in the first and added a solo homer, his 13th, leading off the third as Cleveland stormed to a 7-2 lead.

The Blue Jays have lost four of their last six games after winning four in a row.

In Kansas City, Tony Clark went 4-for-5 with an RBI single in a three-run seventh inning, and former royal Bob Hamelin had a pair of run-scoring singles to lead the Detroit Tigers to a 6-5 victory over the Kansas City Royals.

Clark, Travis Fryman and Hamelin had RBI singles in the seventh to give Detroit a 6-4 lead.

Kansas City's Mike Sweeney hit two home runs.

At Minnesota, Pat Meares had a two-run single to cap a five-run first inning and the Minnesota Twins held on for a 7-5 victory over the Boston Red Sox in the rubber-game of a three-game set.

Rich Robertson won the game, allowing five runs — two earned — and six hits over 6-2/3 innings.

Rick Aguilar, the sixth Minnesota pitcher, allowed one hit in a scoreless ninth inning for his seventh save.

At Texas, Ivan Rodriguez had an RBI double and Juan Gonzalez belted a two-run homer during a three-run first inning as the Texas Rangers defeated the New York Yankees 4-2 for a split of their four-game series.

Texas jumped on starter David Cone (5-3) for three runs in the first inning.

Darren Oliver (2-4) went five-plus innings for the win, allowing two runs and seven hits with two walks and four strikeouts.

In Anaheim, Jim Edmonds continued his torrid hitting with two home runs and three RBI, and Dennis Springer allowed five hits over 6-2/3 innings



Newly re-acquired Anaheim Angels' Tony Phillips scores in the bottom of the third inning against Milwaukee Brewers' catcher Mike Matheny in Anaheim in Phillips' first game as an Angel since 1995. Angel third baseman Dave Hollins (rear) looks on (Reuters photo)

as the Anaheim Angels edged the Milwaukee Brewers 5-4, to extend their winning streak to seven games.

In the seven wins, Edmonds is batting .481 (13-for-27) with five homers, 10 RBI and 11

runs.

In Oakland, James Baldwin allowed four hits over seven innings and Frank Thomas went 4-for-4 with two RBI to lead the Chicago White Sox to a 10-4 victory over the Oakland Athletics and a sweep of the

three-game series.

Thomas had four singles and has reached safely in each of his last 12 plate appearances.

The White Sox have won four straight and eight of their last 11 games.

Donovan Bailey has easy 100m win

VANCOUVER, Canada (AFP) — Canadian 100m Olympic champion Donovan Bailey, running in Canada for the first time since last June, had an easy 100m victory at an international meeting here Sunday, clocking 9.99secs.

Bailey, not noted for his fast starts, led from the beginning against a field which included former world record-holder Leroy Burrell.

The Canadian Olympic champion's time compares with the 9.84secs world record he set in the Atlanta Olympics.

So far this season, Bailey has run just one 100m race — in Rio De Janeiro three weeks ago. He won there with a time of 10.13 seconds.

Most observers regarded Sunday's race as a warm-up by Bailey prior to his June 1 "fastest-man-race", over 150m in Toronto, against American Michael Johnson who won the Olympic gold in the 200m.

The winner of that race will bank \$1.5 million.

Eric Cantona retires

United fans in shock

MANCHESTER (AFP) — Manchester United supporters were United in grief on Monday as they woke up to the realisation that their cult hero Eric Cantona would never again pull on the club's famous red shirt.

The Frenchman's sudden retirement at the relatively early age of 30 left the club's massive worldwide following in a state of shock.

Cantona transformed the club's fortunes when he arrived from Leeds at the end of 1992 and has been the key figure in their domination of English football ever since.

His departure leaves a glaring hole at the heart of the club and United face a difficult job in finding a player of the presence, stature and talent to fill his boots.

Supporters spokesman Andy Walsh says Cantona will be remembered as one of the club's greatest stars.

"I don't think there has been a player in my lifetime who has had a greater rapport with the supporters," said Walsh, secretary of the independent Manchester United supporters association.

"Eric was one of us — he loved the game. He has been tremendous, not just for this club but English football in general."

"He brought a touch of magic to the pitch and has been one of United's greatest-ever players. He is up there alongside the likes of Duncan Edwards."

"Yet Eric has always remained close to the fans. He was always the last to leave the training ground, he was so busy signing autographs."

"If you met him on a night out he would always speak to you. He always had time for people who loved the game."

Hundreds of fans gathered outside United's Old Trafford stadium numbered by the news of Cantona's departure.

"He was God here," said Gary Redhead, a 32-year-old carpenter from the Salford area

of Manchester. "There will never be another like him."

"But he is a proud man and we respect his decision. If he wants to go off and write his books on philosophy, we'll buy his books."

"If he wants to go and make films, we'll go and watch his films."

If he wants to do his painting, we'll buy his pictures. The man is a genius and we love him."

"No-one can ever replace him — he was the messiah," said 21-year-old Salim Patel, a student at Salford University.

"Eric loved the club and always wanted the best for it. We all thought this might happen but it has still come as such a shock."

"Look at us all here — we don't know what is happening and we don't know what to do with ourselves."

Even suggestions that Brazilian star Juninho might be arriving from relegated Middlesbrough to replace Cantona failed to placate some fans.

Tony Chapman, 27, said: "Anyone who thinks Juninho, or anyone else, can replace Eric is wrong and they will soon find that out."

"I think the club should not have let him go. He is still great and could have carried on here."

But lifelong United fan Brendan Dowling said if Juninho was to join the club, Cantona's loss would not be so great.

"I am gutted about Eric leaving but other people could come to the club and be as good as he was," he said.

"I am just glad that Eric hasn't gone to another club. I don't think any of us could have watched him play for another side."

'Moscow to consider applying to host 2008 Olympic Games'

MOSCOW (AFP) — Moscow is considering applying to host the 2008 Olympic Games, Itar-Tass news agency reported, quoting the city's mayor.

Speaking before the start of a marathon on Sunday, Mayor Yuri Luzhkov said that Moscow was likely to apply to host the 2008 Olympics and that he hoped

that President Boris Yeltsin would throw his support behind the initiative.

Moscow hosted the 22nd Olympic games in 1980, but a number of countries led by the United States boycotted the event in protest at Russia's involvement in the Afghan conflict.

St. Petersburg, in northern

Russia, campaigned to host the 28th Games in the year 2004, but did not make it to the list of five finalists announced in March.

The host for the year 2004 will be announced at the 106th session of the international Olympic committee in Lausanne on September 5 this year.

Braves beat Cardinals 5-1, Cubs beat Giants

ATLANTA (R) — Tom Glavine pitched a seven-hitter for his second complete game of the season and Jeff Blauser's two-run double highlighted a three-run seventh inning as the Atlanta Braves beat the St. Louis Cardinals 5-1 Sunday.

In Chicago, Sammy Sosa's second home run of the game, a solo shot in the seventh inning, snapped a tie and lifted the Chicago Cubs to a 5-3 victory over the San Francisco Giants.

In Cincinnati, Dave Burba and three relievers

combined on a nine-hitter and Barry Larkin had a two-run single in the second inning to lead the Cincinnati Reds to a 5-0 victory over the San Diego Padres.

In Montreal, Mike Lansing had five hits and drove in three runs, and Pedro Martinez went seven innings to win his seventh game, leading the Montreal Expos to 7-4 victory over the Los Angeles Dodgers.

In New York, Rey Ordonez, Manny Alexander and Carl Everett drew bases-loaded walks during

an eight-run eighth inning. New York's biggest win in more than a year, as the surging Mets defeated the Colorado Rockies, 10-4.

In Philadelphia, Garrett Stephenson allowed an unearned run and six hits over seven innings, and Scott Rolen and Darren Daulton hit back-to-back homers in the third inning to lead the Philadelphia Phillies to a 5-3 victory

over the Houston Astros.

In Pittsburgh, Gregg Zaun and Kurt Abbott delivered RBI singles in the top of the 10th inning as the Florida Marlins won their seventh straight game and completed a three-game sweep of the Pittsburgh Pirates 5-3.

Former Pirate Bobby Bonilla doubled with one out in the 10th against Pittsburgh reliever Rich Loiselle (1-1).

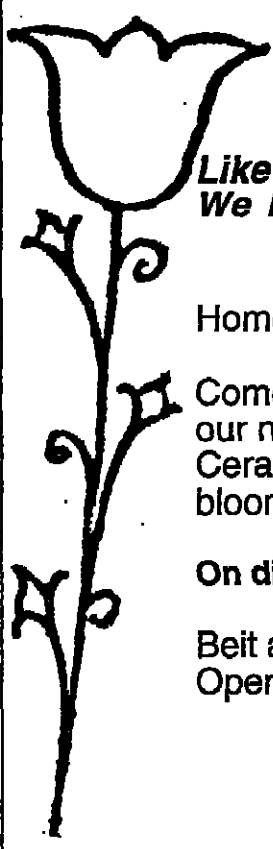
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A presentation will be conducted at JPMC Headquarters in Amman at 10:00 hrs local time Monday the 9th of June 1997, to answer all queries regarding the pre-qualification document.

The closing date for submission of applications is 12:00 hrs local time Thursday 26th of June 1997.

Managing Director
Sameh Madani

Murder of land-sellers a twist in the crumbling peace process

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The second murder in 10 days of a Palestinian accused of selling land to Jews has opened a dangerous new chapter in the collapse of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, Palestinian analysts said Monday.

The summary executions of persons accused of collaborating with the Israeli occupiers were widely seen as reflecting the depth of Palestinian desperation as they see their dreams of building an independent state deflated by hardline Israeli policies.

With the peace process in nearly continual crisis for months and faced with a constant expansion of Jewish settlement on Arab land, Palestinians seem to have returned to vigilante justice which was common against "traitors" during the 1987-1993 "intifada" against Israeli occupation.

"The killing of collaborators is an old issue. But with the peace process going badly, Palestinians are returning to their old methods," said Ghassan Khatib, head of the Jerusalem Media

Communications Centre (JMCC).

"In the past two years there weren't any cases (of killings) that I know of, because there was some movement in the peace process," Mr. Khatib said.

The latest victim of the renewed violence was Harbi Abu Sara, 48, whose body was found on Saturday in the self-rule area of Ramallah with several bullets in the back of the head.

He was accused of selling land to Israelis, like Farid Bashiti, 60, whose body was also found dumped in Ramallah, 10 days ago, his hands tied behind his back and the back of his head smashed in.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Monday accused Palestinian security forces of involvement in the murders and called orders by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) for the execution of land dealers "racist."

"The fact that two men were killed involving elements of the Palestinian (National) Authority raises

very tough questions about the peaceful intentions of the authority. We are waiting for it to order an immediate halt to this," he said.

"This is a racist law... it is contrary to spirit of cooperation and peace," he said.

A week before Bashiti's killing, Palestinian Justice Minister Freih Abu Meddein announced that Palestinians who sold land to Jews would face execution.

The order has not been voted into law by the Palestinian Legislative Council and Palestinian security services have denied any involvement in the killings.

But observers said that whoever was behind them, the killings were a sign of despair with the peace process among the Palestinians, who are desperate to stop continuing settlement construction.

"We are not looking to kill, but the sale (of Palestinian lands to Israelis) is a terrorist act against the Palestinian people," said Marwan Kanafani, the spokesman of Palestinian President Yasser Arafat.

Palestinians have been unable to bring a stop to settlement building either by diplomatic means or by street riots, which broke out after Israel began in mid-March construction of a new Jewish settlement on Jabal Abu Ghneim, in Arab east Jerusalem, known to Israelis as Har Homa.

So returning to the intifada-style killings is a last-resort attempt to confront settlements.

"Palestinians feel Israel has stepped up its buying of land, its settlement activities. They feel they have to stop it," Mr. Khatib said.

Jabal Abu Ghneim typifies why Palestinians feel such revulsion against land dealers and why sale of land to Jews is considered high treason: Over 70 per cent of the hill had been sold by Arabs to Jews since 1967.

Many West Bank settlements are built partially on land sold to Israelis or foreign Jews, and Palestinians see each bit of land sold as increasing Israel's hold over the areas they seek for a future state.

Reports of death of Omar Abdul Rahman investigated — lawyer

CAIRO (AFP) — Supporters of militant Egyptian cleric Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman, who is serving a life sentence in the United States, are investigating reports that he has died, his lawyer in Egypt said Monday.

"We have received reports from the United States that he has died," Muntasser Zayat, a lawyer for militants, told AFP.

"We have no information to confirm or deny this," Mr. Zayat said, adding that he had faxed a message to the U.S. embassy in Cairo for details on the sheikh's fate.

"We want official information," Mr. Zayat said.

A spokesman for the U.S. embassy in Cairo said it was not aware of any developments concerning the ailing

cleric and that any information should come from Washington.

Sheikh Abdul Rahman, the spiritual leader of the Jamaa Islamiyah group, was jailed for life in January 1996 for his role in a vast terrorist plot against the United States and an assassination bid against Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

U.S. prison spokesman Todd Craig, quoted by the Arab daily Al Hayat Monday, denied that Sheikh Abdul Rahman had died.

Mr. Craig told the London-based newspaper that the cleric was "alive and in a medical center in Springfield (Missouri). His condition is stable."

"Craig said he could not provide further details on the health of Sheikh Abdul

Rahman who is known to suffer from diabetes," Al Hayat said.

Mr. Zayat said one of Sheikh Abdul Rahman's Islamist students was informed by Egyptian militants in Europe that he had died three days ago in prison.

Last week Egyptian Interior Minister Hassan Alfi said Egypt had rejected an offer from the United States to hand over Sheikh Abdul Rahman, after the 1993 World Trade Centre bombing in New York in which he was implicated.

Jamaa spearheads the militant campaign to overthrow Mr. Mubarak and establish an Islamist state in Egypt and has repeatedly threatened to target U.S. interests over the jailing of Sheikh Abdul Rahman.

Rafsanjani's eight-year rule a battle against contradictions

President steps down mission unaccomplished

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani will step down after Friday's election without realising his aim of building a prosperous economy and ending his country's isolation, a battle hampered by fierce domestic opposition.

Since taking office in 1989 in a country traumatised by the 1980-1988 war against neighbouring Iraq and the chaos of the 1979 Islamic revolution, Mr. Rafsanjani has managed to put into place much infrastructure and shift resources away from war to industrial growth.

But his efforts at liberalising the economy led to soaring inflation, unemployment and popular discontent, sparking opposition from conservatives and hardliners.

Known for his moderate views, 63-year-old Rafsanjani also tried to ease religious strictures regulating social and cultural life in Iran since the revolution, efforts which earned him the ire of strict Islamists. He presided over a country heading in opposite directions — one on the one hand promoting world peace and seeking integration into the international community, and on the other openly antagonising such countries as Israel and the United States, and at times even locking horns with Europe.

However, many political observers distinguish between Mr. Rafsanjani's aims and the uncompromis-

ing attitude taken sometimes by Iran against the outside world.

The president, considered a pragmatist, often appears sincere enough in his professed goals of good relations with other nations to encourage investment and trade, but he has been denied a free hand in a complex political system where others wield great power.

Iran is already embroiled in a row with the European Union (EU) over the death sentence against British author Salman Rushdie and now finds itself in a deep crisis with the EU over its alleged role in international terrorism.

Mr. Rafsanjani has had no luck in improving relations with Iran's arch-enemy, the United States, and instead saw his country slapped with an all-out U.S. economic embargo.

Although conservative clerics, who have considerable clout, initially backed Mr. Rafsanjani in his battle against left-wing radicals, they later abandoned him as his market reform programs went awry.

The clergy also feared that closer economic ties with the West could allow Western political and cultural influence to make inroads into Iranian society.

Mr. Rafsanjani finally succumbed to the pressure, abandoning many of his plans, but he kept a nominal commitment to market reform and cultural and political openness.

He was weakened further as Ayatollah Ali Khamenei,

the successor to the republic's founder Ayatollah Ruhollah Khamenei, rose in popularity among the regime's hardliners with his firm stand against the West, notably the United States.

The highest political, religious and military authority in Iran, the ayatollah has insisted on faithful adherence to the revolutionary principles laid down by his predecessor.

He still pledges support to Muslim liberation movements throughout the world and wholeheartedly opposes Western cultural and political liberalism.

Ayatollah Khamenei has often criticised pragmatic tendencies in Mr. Rafsanjani's government and urged officials to put religious and revolutionary interests above national and economic ones.

"Iran must seek neither a Western-style capitalist economy nor a communist-centralised one," he said four years ago when Mr. Rafsanjani was reelected. "We must aim for an Islamic economy."

Mr. Rafsanjani's economic achievements failed to win him popularity with many who blamed his liberalisation programme for their loss of government subsidies which they had previously heavily relied on to survive.

This disenchantment was reflected in the last presidential election in 1993, when Mr. Rafsanjani received only 63 per cent of the vote against 95 per cent when he was first elected.

U.N. plans Cyprus talks

ATHENS (AFP) — A senior U.N. official told Greece Sunday that Secretary-General Kofi Annan had decided to stage direct talks between the Greek and Turkish communities on Cyprus, an official statement said here.

U.N. Under Secretary-General for Political Affairs Sir Kieran Prendergast informed Greece's Deputy Foreign Minister Yannis Kranidiotis of the U.N. plans, the foreign ministry said.

Mr. Kranidiotis, who is of Cypriot origin, replied that since the United Nations was proposing the talks it should take responsibility for their progress, the statement said.

The Greek official blamed the intransigence of the Turkish side for the failure to resolve the problem of the divided Mediterranean island.

Mr. Prendergast said in Nicosia Friday that the leaders of the two communities in Cyprus were ready to take part in any future U.N.-brokered direct talks without preconditions.

Mr. Annan would make a decision by the end of May about staging the talks, aimed at resolving the 23-year division of Cyprus, Mr. Prendergast said.



"The Girls of Alexandria" painting by Egyptian artist Mahmud Said exhibited at the Egyptian Museum of Modern Art. Mr. Said (1897-1964), is famous for having unveiled Egyptian women in art. His birth centenary is celebrated by the state on Monday amid a tug-of-war between art lovers and those who brand his nudes as pornography. The exhibition will be open for public on the evening of May 19 (AFP photo)

Late Egyptian 'painter of the people' remains controversial

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt marked the centenary Monday of the birth of the portrait artist who "unveiled the Egyptian woman," as his fans and foes fought over whether his nude paintings were pornographic.

Some of the fiercest debates over Mahmud Said's work occurred on the editorial board of the cultural monthly Ibdaa (Creation), which had to delay publication of its April issue.

The board could not agree on whether the issue should contain pictures of some of Mr. Said's nudes.

"We are caught in the long struggle of the forces of fanaticism and their mercenaries, who use religion as a business and fail to distinguish between art and pornography," said editor-in-chief Ahmad Abdul Moeti Hejazi.

Ibdaa will go ahead and publish its April issue in May with the "offensive" turn-of-the-century nudes despite opposition by several officials pressing to exclude them, Mr. Hejazi said.

"A nude in art cannot be treated like a naked person walking down a street, who can be arrested. No one can

arrest a nude depicted in a painting or in a book," Mr. Hejazi said.

"The forces of obscurantism are giving us a serious problem because they are opposed to art, thinking and life itself," he said, adding that he was determined not to surrender.

According to Mr. Hejazi, several people have advised him to keep Mr. Said's nudes and some controversial text out of the magazine to avoid the wrath of the censors in some of the conservative Arab gulf states, where Ibdaa is sold.

Egypt meanwhile started the week Monday with a public exhibition of Mr. Said's work and a two-day seminar.

The seminar will be opened by Culture Minister Faruq Hosni, a painter, who challenged an Islamist deputy a few years back who had launched a campaign against Ibdaa after it published a nude of Gustav Klimt.

Long considered "the painter of the people," Mr. Said was born to an aristocratic family. He was the maternal uncle of Queen Farida, the first wife of King Faruq of Egypt who was deposed in 1952.

Mr. Said studied law in

Paris but gave it up for art and went on to free the representation of Egyptian women from the "yoke of Christian icons" and "her abstract depiction in Islamic art," art critic Badr Eddin Abu Ghazi said.

Mr. Said's women have many luminous complexions, full lips, big black eyes and woolly hair held back with colourful scarves.

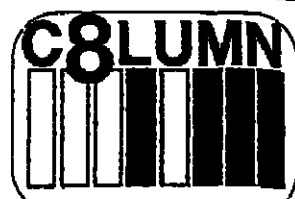
In "The Daughters of Alexandria," the subjects' heavy braids cascade down to their hips. Their coquettish black shawls also reveal low-cut necklines and bare arms.

The paintings aroused admiration and indignation at the turn of the century.

They have been viewed as a symbol of the emancipation of Egypt and its women, who defiantly threw away their veils, imposed on them by Ottoman rulers, to take part in the 1919 revolution against the British.

The conservative trend which has taken hold of Egypt for the past two decades has prompted Cairo School of Fine Arts officials to prohibit students from using nude models.

Mr. Said's works are on permanent display at Cairo's Modern Museum of Art.



Egypt hails veteran Cannes festival winner

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt paid tribute on Monday to veteran film director Yousef Shahin, 71, who clinched a major prize at the Cannes festival. Shahin won the 50th anniversary festival prize for the whole of his work, after his latest offering "Destiny" was warmly received at the festival for its denunciation of Islamic fundamentalism. Egyptian state television interrupted its programmes on Sunday to announce the prize, which topped a 47-year career. "We are very happy to see an Egyptian carry this high honour, which gives our cinema a universal character," said fellow Egyptian director Hussein Kamal. "My heart is beating. I have butterflies in the stomach. I have been waiting for this for 47 years." Shahin said after winning the prize. The director also sent a message to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to "offer the prize to Egypt, home of light, liberty and art." Egyptian news agency MENA said Monday.

Marianne Faithfull hospitalised in Greece

ATHENS (AFP) — British singer Marianne Faithfull, has undergone a minor operation after contracting a leg infection during a concert tour in Greece, organisers said here Monday. The former Rolling Stones groupie, whose state of health was not considered to be a cause for concern, is expected to leave the private clinic in Salonika, northern Greece, where she has been treated since Saturday, the organisers said. They added that Faithfull fell ill after two concerts, one in Athens on Thursday and the other in Salonika on Friday. Faithfull cancelled her concerts until next Thursday, most notably in Austria.

Prince Andrew has a new girlfriend — press

LONDON (AFP) — Romance has been blossoming for the past four months between Britain's Prince Andrew and a 29-year-old brunette who works as a researcher for the BBC, British press reported Monday. Henriette Peace, daughter of a wine-seller, met the Duke of York, 37, at a reception in which she had been invited because she had previously worked in the offices of Andrew's brother Prince Charles, the heir to the British throne, according to the Express newspaper. The Mirror, quoting a friend of the prince, reported that Andrew's former wife Sarah Ferguson had no objection to the new relationship. "She does not object to Andrew seeing other women. She positively encourages him to," the friend was quoted as saying. Nonetheless, the friend said, there was no question of Queen Elizabeth's second son remarrying. "Fergie" has also revealed that she has had a few romantic encounters since her divorce last year.

Pavarotti farm damaged in arson attack

MODENA (AFP) — An arson attack caused damage at a farm belonging to Italian tenor Luciano Pavarotti near Modena in northern Italy, police said. The blaze, which damaged furniture and material at the farm, which is under restoration, occurred Saturday. Police also found a painted message reading "first warning." Police said they did not think the attack was directed against Pavarotti, currently performing in Seattle, who rented the farm to a record

First U.S. female military pilot seeks discharge in adultery case

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The first female B-52 pilot sought an honourable discharge Monday to avoid a court martial for adultery in a case that has aggravated the U.S. military's angst over sex and its soldiers.

The air force has charged Lieutenant Kelly Flinn, 26, with having an affair with a single military man and a married civilian, lying to investigators about the latter and disobeying orders to stay away from him.

The court martial is set to begin Tuesday at Minot Air Force Base in North Dakota but Lt. Flinn formally applied Monday to resign with an honourable discharge.

Air Force Secretary Sheila Widnall could decide on the request as early as Tuesday, but the complicated case probes all military's sore spots as it struggles with a rash of rape and harassment charges and a growing number of women in

its ranks.

Some charge the sexual conduct rules are anachronistic and too harsh in the air force, where 67 people were court-martialed for adultery last year.

Others point out that Lt. Flinn, who is single, says she believed the married man was legally separated and they argue it is sexist to prosecute her when sex with prostitutes is considered practically a rite of passage for U.S. servicemen.

But the air force complains that the whole thing has been misrepresented by the press and that the sexual angle has been blown out of proportion.

"Adultery is the one that's getting the most attention but it's one of five charges and certainly not the most serious charge," said air force spokesman Captain Byron James.

Lt. Flinn is also charged with fraternisation, conduct unbecoming an officer, disobeying a direct order and making a false

statement. Cap. James said that lying was the most significant count against Lt. Flinn.

"And just the fact that Lieutenant Flinn is the first female pilot gives her some notoriety," he added.

Indeed, Lt. Flinn has been making the media rounds and telling her story in carefully selected interviews. The former rising star in the elite military branch has admitted to having a romantic relationship with Marc Zigo, 24, but said he lied to her and told her that he was legally separated from his wife.

"I fell in love with the wrong guy and believed everything he told me. That's basically led me to where I am," she said last week.

Defense Secretary William Cohen, who was set to present a wide-ranging review of the U.S. military Monday, has declined to comment on the case but he defended the sex rules some consider too prud-

ish for the 1990s.

"The duty of our military services is to establish and promote order and discipline, high morale," he said in a CBS interview Sunday.

"We require those men and women who serve in the services to exert extraordinary discipline and sacrifice, and we want to keep that," he added.

Mr. Cohen did concede that regulations on sexual conduct should be reviewed to ensure uniformity throughout the services.

Media reports last week said the air force secretary had already decided to grant Lt. Flinn's request — which the service denies — but the records suggest her chances are slim.

Anyone facing a court martial has the option of requesting resignation instead and such requests are commonly granted, but getting a resignation with an honourable discharge is considerably more rare.